

FLOWERS & FRUIT.
OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH

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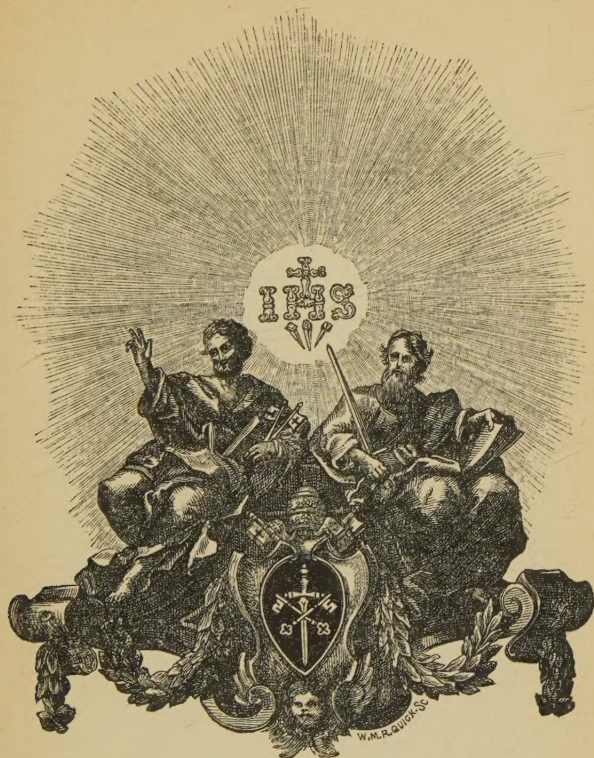
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FLOWERS
AND
FRUIT
OF THE
CATHOLIC
FAITH



FLOWERS & FRUIT OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH



GATHERED FROM THE
CATECHISM: BY A RELIGIOUS
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DEDICATED
TO THOSE WHO WATCHED
"THE SUNSHINE ON THE HILLS"
AS THEY
THOUGHT ON THE THINGS
OF GOD

First Published 1921
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AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE Title of this little book explains its subject, since a certain knowledge of the foundation truths of Christianity is taken for granted, and the book is only an attempt to help those who are already Communicants, or who desire to be so, to a fuller knowledge of, and greater joy in, our most holy Faith.

JESUS ONLY

LET me come closer to thee, Jesus,
Oh, closer, day by day :
Let me lean harder on thee, Jesus,
Yes, harder all the way.

Let me shew forth thy beauty, Jesus,
Like sunshine on the hills,
Oh, let my lips pour forth thy sweetness
In joyous sparkling rills.

Yes, like a fountain, precious Jesus,
Take me, and let me be,
Keep me and use me daily, Jesus,
For thee, for only thee.

In all my heart and will, O Jesus,
Be altogether King,
Make me a loyal subject, Jesus,
To thee in everything.

Thirsting and hungering for thee, Jesus,
With blessed hunger here,
Longing for Heaven and Sion's Mountain,
No thirst, no hunger there.

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FLOWERS AND FRUIT OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH

(Gathered from the Catechism)

"It surely will not be maintained that the Catechism is one of the childish things to be put away when one becomes a man: rather we believe that those who compiled it gathered up into brief poignant and serviceable sentences as much of the principles of religion as would form the basis of a man's spiritual life, when he had passed out of the region of childhood into the hard facts of practical experience. And it will be found, that in many cases at all events, it is true, that the inner meaning underlying these questions and answers has only been understood when life has given its fuller teaching and experience its deeper explanation."

CANON NEWBOLT.

CHAPTER I

NAMES, GODPARENTS

THESE words give the reason for following the lines of the Church Catechism as a basis for teaching Catholic Life and Practice, vital matters concerning which we need to be learning all our lives. The word "Catechism" comes from a Greek word meaning "*viva voce* instruction," that is, instruction by word of mouth. Our Catechism was drawn up at the Reformation and altered a little at each revision of the Prayer Book. The second part, on the Sacraments, was added by Bishop Overall of Norwich in 1604.

The Reformation was the time when the Church of England, while keeping all essential Catholic doctrine, shook off many errors and false teachings. It must never be thought that our Church *began* at the Reformation: the very word implies that it did not. If we speak of a man as a "reformed" character, we mean that he is the same person with his faults corrected.

The Reformers were most careful to keep the Apostolic Succession, that is the succession of Bishops direct from the Apostles, and from this it follows that we have valid or true Sacraments. Every Bishop in our Church has been consecrated by another Bishop, right back to the first Bishops, who were consecrated by the Apostles. And no Priest has ever offered, or can ever offer, the Holy Sacrifice who has not been ordained by a Bishop. That is the great difference between the Church and other Christian bodies. Our Priesthood comes direct to us from our Lord through the Apostles, the others have broken off from the unity of the Church, and formed their own ministries. The Catechism, although it was drawn up after the Reformation, simply states clearly the Catholic doctrines always held by the Church.

WHAT IS YOUR NAME? N. OR M.

The Catechism begins with what looks like a very simple question, "What is your name?" N. or M. stands for "Name or Names" (*Nomen aut Nomina* in Latin). A name is not an unimportant thing. Great importance is given to names in Holy Scripture. The different names given to God show the stages of progressive revelation, and the Name of Jesus was insisted on by supernatural revelation before the Virgin Birth. Think what that Name means to us: it is the Name which we love above all others, the Name to say to ourselves in times of suffering or sudden temptation, for it has a strong power against evil spirits: the Name which we cannot say too often to the dying. The English Church keeps a special Festival in honour of the Holy Name (August 7th).

Again, in the Bible we notice how our Lord changed St. Peter's name to mark a change in his character, and we often find a name

used by him to make a special appeal to the heart: "Mary," "Thomas," "Simon, Son of Jonas," "Saul, Saul."

It is important in giving names to children to choose those which have some meaning and inspiration. There is a tradition in the Church that a child is under the special patronage of the Saint whose name it bears, and the names of our Lady and the Saints are the best inspiration of all.

But even if a name has no special meaning, it does mean to us that we were each as individuals made God's children in Holy Baptism. At Baptism God gave to us our Christian name, and with it our Vocation, and the failures of life are those who have missed or refused their Vocation. God says to each one of us, "I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine" (Isa. xliii. 1). No work in life can be dull or unimportant if it is the work to which he has called us, for in our calling, whatever it may be, we can live for him and help the souls of others.

Those who are called to work in institutions of any kind must always remember to treat people, and especially children, each as a separate individual soul. Each one has a different character and Vocation, and if we recognise this and have the love of God in our hearts, we shall be able to help many under our care to fulfil their Vocation, to help them that is, to know our Lord as their personal Friend and Master, and live their lives for him.

No one need be useless, all have their Vocation, and sometimes those whose Call is to a life of suffering or inaction can do the best work of all, since it is character and influence which help others, far more than anything we say or do.

Our name should remind us also that the Baptismal Vows were taken in that name, that we are each as individuals responsible for the keeping of those vows, and that by them, and by our response to our Vocation, we shall be judged. Our names, the names we received in Baptism, are written in the book of life; it rests with us whether they will be found there at the last, or be blotted out.

“ MY GODFATHERS AND GODMOTHERS ”

Godparents are first mentioned by the early Fathers about two hundred years after our Lord's Birth. The “ early Fathers ” are those leaders of the early Church who lived quite soon after our Lord's life on earth. They wrote down the teaching which they had received from the Apostles, and from those who had themselves been taught by the Apostles. So that, after the voice of the living Church and the Bible, it is from tradition handed down through the ages that we can learn most truly what was the teaching of our Lord and the Apostles, since those who have received their teaching at first hand are naturally those who know most about the mind and wishes of their teacher. If this were realised it would be impossible to accept the new doctrines of modern sects, which had no place in the teaching of the Primitive Church.

In the first days of the Church it was very necessary to guarantee the Christian education of the child, because the Christians were comparatively few in number, and the world all round was heathen. In many cases it is nearly as necessary now.

Godparents have always been regarded as representatives of the Church, and should be confirmed and Communicants. They undertake that the child shall be brought to Confirmation when it is old enough, and are not likely to see the necessity for this if they themselves are unconfirmed. To be a sponsor is a real responsibility, and should not be looked upon as a social matter, but undertaken with thought and prayer.

They are called godparents because as our natural parents brought us into a natural family, so our godparents bring us into the family of God. They are also called sponsors, that is, those who answer for another, and sureties, that is, those who undertake that another shall perform some action. To be a godfather or a godmother is a serious matter : the Priest tells those who are godparents that it is their duty to see that, as soon as the child is old enough, it shall understand what a solemn Vow has been made in its name. Also to see that the child is brought to Confirmation after proper preparation, and from that time becomes

a regular Communicant. If the child's parents are instructed Church people it may not be necessary to interfere at all, but the godparents should pray for their godchildren regularly and always be ready to supplement the parent's teaching.

It is well for all godparents to notice what the Prayer Book says to them about the right age for Confirmation: "Ye are to take care that this child be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him *so soon as* he can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue and be further instructed in the Church Catechism." No age is mentioned, and most well-instructed children of from eight to twelve can fulfil these conditions. If children become regular Communicants for a year or two before they leave school they are far more likely to persevere in after life, for they will have the grace of the Sacraments to help them in the difficulties and temptations they will meet with in the world, and also they will have formed the habit of regularity. Hundreds of children are lost to the Church every year because Confirmation is left too late, and boys and girls go out into the world without having first formed a habit of coming to the Sacraments. Godparents may often help in encouraging early Confirmation.

It is a great question, which may come before any who are asked to stand as godparents, as to whether it is right to have children baptised if it seems unlikely that they will be brought up as Christians. Baptism does increase responsibility, and the sins of the baptised are quite different from those of the unbaptised. The best way in doubtful cases is to consult a Priest, or it is safe to bring children to Holy Baptism if one can make sure of being responsible for them oneself. With a dying child it is always right, and if it is not possible to find a Priest in time, *anyone* may and should baptise the child, since baptism can if necessary be performed by any, even the unbaptised. All that is required is to pour water on the child's forehead and say, "N., I baptise thee, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." If the child lives it must be received into the Church, but not baptised again. It has generally been taught by the Church that unbaptised infants can only attain to natural happiness, they

cannot enter into the Beatific Vision of God. So it is of the utmost importance not to let a child die unbaptised. If there is any doubt about whether people have been validly baptised they should be baptised conditionally. It is most important before Confirmation to make sure that the candidates have been baptised. In conditional Baptism the Priest says : " N., if thou art not already baptised, I baptise thee."

We sometimes hear it said that it is not fair to undertake solemn Vows for an unconscious infant, but it must be borne in mind that God promises great and immediate benefits which cannot be received otherwise.

Besides the definite things which godparents undertake, there is also the question of influence. We should never forget that godparents can stand for a good deal in the life of a child if they take pains to make the association a happy and helpful one.



CHAPTER II

THE SACRAMENTS

“ IN MY BAPTISM ”

WE come now in our study of the Catechism to the first of the two great Sacraments, Holy Baptism, and it will be necessary first to go on to the last part of the Catechism, and be quite clear as to the meaning of a Sacrament.

“ The Incarnation is the union of God and Man in the Person of Jesus Christ, this union is extended in his mystical Body the Church, through the Sacraments as the means of grace. The Sacraments are the divinely ordered channels through which the spiritual forces of the Incarnation reach us.” That is to say, the Sacraments place us in living union with Jesus Christ, if we receive them with faith and repentance.

There are seven Sacraments, the two first being “generally necessary to salvation,” that is necessary “in general.”

1. Holy Baptism.
2. Holy Communion.
3. Confirmation.
4. Penance.
5. Ordination.
6. Holy Matrimony.
7. Holy Unction.

All Sacraments have an outward and an inward part, and the inward part is signified (that is to say taught) by the outward.

In Holy Baptism the outward part, with the Invocation, is the water, which is first blessed by the Priest. He makes the sign

of the Cross over it, and prays, "Sanctify this water," that is, make this water holy.

(Holy Water is often used at other times as a reminder of our Baptism and as a guard against the power of evil spirits. In all old Churches you see Holy Water stoups in the porches, from which the people took Holy Water and signed themselves with the Sign of the Cross. The practice is now revived in some Churches, and many find it helpful to have a Holy Water stoup in their room, and sign themselves before they go to sleep, saying some such ejaculation as "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow," or the Invocation. Holy Water is also used when anything is blessed or set apart for God's service, such as a Church window, and we may ask a Priest to bless our Crucifixes and Rosaries.)

The inward part of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism is the washing away of sin.

In Holy Communion the outward part is the Bread and Wine, the inward part is the Body and Blood of Christ, which are "verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful" as the Catechism tells us.

In Confirmation the outward part is the laying on of the Bishop's hands, the inward part is the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

In Holy Unction the outward part is the Holy Oil (and this should be consecrated by a Bishop), the inward part is the refreshment, and if God wills it, the healing of body as well as soul.

In Ordination the outward part is the laying on of the Bishop's hands, and the inward part a special gift of the Holy Ghost consecrating and setting apart for ever to the priesthood.

In Penance the outward part is formed by the words of Absolution spoken by the Priest, the inward part is the cleansing from sin by the Precious Blood.

In Holy Matrimony the outward part is the consent of both parties, declared by giving and receiving the ring, the inward part is the indissoluble union between man and wife and grace to live the married life aright.

We shall touch on each of these Sacraments more fully in the course of our instructions.

HOLY BAPTISM

We find the Sacrament of Holy Baptism foreshadowed in the Old Testament. The Ark, for instance, is mentioned as a type of Baptism in our own Baptismal Service. And Circumcision, the rite by which Jewish children entered into covenant with God, was a shadow of Baptism, just as the Passover Supper was a shadow of Holy Communion.

There was also a kind of Baptism (the word Baptism means washing) among the Jews, a ceremonial washing which Gentiles underwent who became Proselytes to the Jewish faith. This Baptism was much the same as that of St. John the Baptist, and was a sign of spiritual desire on the part of those who submitted to it. It pointed on to Christian Baptism which was to be the outcome of the life and death of Christ. It necessitated confession of sins, but was not in itself a means of grace or of the forgiveness of sins. Our Lord, though himself without sin, submitted to this Baptism, as an Act of Humility, in order to "fulfil all righteousness" (St. Matt. iii. 15) and as pointing on to the sanctification by water and the Holy Ghost which would be possible after his death.

Holy Baptism is described in the New Testament as a new and spiritual birth. In Baptism we are "regenerated," that is "born again" into the family of God, the new and spiritual birth of which our Lord speaks "except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (St. John iii. 3). By Baptism we are made children of God, we are united to Christ and we receive the Holy Spirit. We also receive remission of all our sins. "Arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins" (Acts xxii. 16).

" WHEREIN I WAS MADE A MEMBER OF CHRIST,
THE CHILD OF GOD,
AND AN INHERITOR OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN "

Think what tremendous gifts these are. We were born with sinful natures; the first man Adam having sinned, so all who come after him are born with inherited sinful tendencies. In

Holy Baptism God takes us and cleanses us from all stain of sin. The white Baptismal robe is a true symbol of the state of the soul after this wonderful Sacrament. All sin is washed away, not only the original sin with which we were born, but, in the case of those baptised after infancy, actual sin, that is sins which we have committed ourselves. When adults are baptised it is right that they should make a special confession of their sins as an act of penitence and humiliation, but they cannot receive Absolution, because no unbaptised person can receive any other Sacrament, so that in their case Baptism is also Absolution.

“ A MEMBER OF CHRIST ”

This means that in Baptism we are made members of Christ's Mystical Body, the Church. The Church is spoken of in the Bible as the Mystical Body of Christ, that is having a real though invisible union with him. Christ is the Head of the Church, and we are made his members in Baptism, joined to him supernaturally through this Sacrament as closely as the members of a body are joined to the head (1 Cor. xii. 12 and 27 ; Eph. i. 22). This thought ought to help us if we realise what it means, “ Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ? ” (Acts xxii. 7). “ Me,” not “ my people,” but “ Me.” We hurt our Lord by our sins because we are members of his Body. We hurt each other also because we are members one of another. “ Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ” (1 Cor. xii. 26). If we do wrong ourselves we cannot prevent its doing harm to others ; no one can possibly over-estimate the unconscious influence for good and evil we have over one another.

If then we were asked how we were made members of Christ, the answer would be quite clear, that it was at our Baptism, when we were baptised with water and the Holy Ghost by the hands of the Priest. We are saved by being joined to Christ, by being made part of his Mystical Body, and it will be seen that this is one great reason for Infant Baptism. It has been the practice of the whole Church from the earliest days, for we cannot too soon be regenerated and made members of Christ. Our Lord said, “ Of

such is the kingdom of heaven ” (St. Luke xviii. 16). The children were brought to him, not to be taught, but that he might lay his hands on them, shewing that they might receive spiritual gifts from him, even when they could not understand. We read, too, in these first days, of whole households being baptised, which must have included children, and we feel that the modern teaching of those who would withhold children from Baptism is very far from the mind of Christ and his Church.

We often think of sin too much as affecting ourselves ; we fail, feel sore and disappointed, and cease to try. And yet in spite of all our failures we are still members of Christ. We should try and realise more what sin means, and that to do wrong or get careless or to be unkind grieves the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We are so apt to be selfish about religion ; religion does not only mean help and comfort for ourselves, God may take that away in order to prove the reality of our love to Him. Religion means knowing God as our Father, Christ as our personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit as him who strengthens and enlightens us, trying with all our hearts to live for God and for others, not for ourselves. Not giving up because we cannot *feel* love for God or enjoy prayer and worship, but rather persevering the more, knowing that our Lord has said, “ He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me ” (St. John xiv. 21).

“ THE CHILD OF GOD ”

It follows naturally from our being made members of Christ that we become children of God, because in Baptism we are united to Christ, and Christ is the Son of God. God made us, but in Adam all men fell away from God, therefore we are adopted children of God in our Baptism. “ God sent forth his Son that we might receive the adoption of sons ” (Gal. iv. 4, 5).

We ought to think more earnestly of the duties we owe to God as his children. The chief duties a child owes to its parents are love and obedience. And if we realise what the love of God means to us, we cannot but love him in return. God so loved us that he gave his only Son to die for us. He has made us his own

children in Holy Baptism ; after Baptism we have sinned against him ; he cleanses us again and again in Absolution ; he gives us strength to withstand temptation in Confirmation ; he comes to us himself in Holy Communion. All these and many other wonderful gifts he has given us, and we can never tire out his patience with us. Surely we must love him in return ? And love means obedience, for if we love, it follows that we want to please the one loved.

So when the temptation comes to do what we like instead of what is right, remember that we can shew love to God and repay him a little for all his goodness to us every time we choose the right, instead of pleasing self. We have the choice of our own will or our Heavenly Father's will many times every day, from the first moment of waking, when we choose whether we shall give way to self-indulgence or rise in time to ask him to bless our day and take care of those we love.

Then let us remember of whom it was specially said by our Lord himself, " They shall be called the children of God " (St. Matt. v. 9). Who are they who are so specially God's children ? The peacemakers. It is not easy after a quarrel to make the first advance, especially if we are the least in fault, but whenever we do so we can claim a little of this special Beatitude. We are acting as God's children should do when we humble our pride, and say simply that we are sorry for our share and are content to leave the other person's sins to his own conscience.

But being a peacemaker goes further than that ; it means also one who makes for peace, one who smooths over little difficulties and is kind and patient and does not repeat unkind things or criticise others, but finds kind things to say about them. We can all do these things, and they do not sound very great or important, yet we have our Lord's own word for it that they who strive to fulfil the blessed difficult task of peacemaker are in a very special way the " children of God."

"AN INHERITOR OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"

An inheritor is one who has already come into possession of something. God is our Father and Heaven is his home, so that we may rightly expect to inherit our Father's home if we are his obedient children. We cannot live here in defiance of his will and then expect to inherit the kingdom of God. We could not even be happy in Heaven if we lived on earth as if this life were all. In this life we have a fortaste, in the next full participation, of the joy of Heaven.

"Some day or other I shall surely come
Where true hearts wait for me,
Then let me learn the sayings of that Home
Whilst here on earth I be,
Lest my poor lips, for want of words,
Be dumb in that high company."

If we want to enter fully into our inheritance we must begin to enter into it here and now, and try and love and serve God with all our hearts. We must not put him off, remembering always that awful warning, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee" (St. Luke xii. 20). The great thing is that each should follow his own Vocation earnestly; it is not required of everyone that they should enter a Convent or become a foreign missionary, there are many different Vocations. Work should never be taken up only as a means of livelihood, but with the intention of doing all we can for God and our fellow-men in whatever work he calls us to do. One beautiful thought is that the Kingdom of Heaven, "our Inheritance," is specially promised to those who do works of mercy for his sake (St. Matt. xxv. 34-40). It is an inspiring thought, and may well help us to do things from which we naturally shrink, and to be kind to people who are uninteresting or unresponsive. Remember, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (St. Matt. xxv. 40).

Never lose an opportunity of helping others spiritually, and bear in mind that no one can help another unless he be tremendously in earnest himself. Half-hearted people never help anyone.

"How do you win any soul for Christ? How do you work so that in the next world you will be greeted by many who will say, 'It was through you I got up here'? You will do it if you will draw the power of Christ into yourself and let him work through you. Take your own effort, your own love for humanity, blend with it the power of Christ, and in that power you will rescue for God many and many a soul."

"In all my heart and will, O Jesus,
Be altogether King,
Make me a loyal subject, Jesus,
To thee in everything."

It is only as true and loyal subjects that we can inherit the Kingdom of God our Father.

"THEY DID PROMISE AND VOW THREE THINGS IN MY NAME"

Everyone knows what a promise is, and that it is wrong and dishonourable to break one. A Vow is a much more serious form of promise. A clear definition is that "A Vow is a solemn promise made before God, any breach of which is sin."

There are various other kinds of Vows besides the Baptismal Vows, and in these days it is of very great importance to realise how grave is the sin of breaking a Vow. For instance the Marriage Vows *cannot* be broken without sin. The Church says solemnly, "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder." The idea that re-marriage after divorce is allowable is wrong: any Christian who marries a man who has a wife alive, or a woman who has a husband alive, even if the divorce has been granted for the very gravest sin, is not married at all in the eyes of God and the Church, and no Priest should admit them to Communion for they are living in sin.

Holy Matrimony is one of the five lesser Sacraments, having mutual consent for an outward sign, and the indissoluble union of man and wife, with help to live the married life aright, for its inward grace. It *may* be necessary sometimes for a man and wife to separate, though even this should only be done for some very serious reason, but nothing but death can undo the marriage.

No one ought to marry without thinking most seriously about the marriage vows, since they are lifelong while both are alive. Marriage is a Vocation blessed by God in one of his sacraments, and those to whom that Vocation comes must take care that it is a Christian marriage, one in which God can bless our vows. Often the time before marriage is the time of all others when a girl can influence a man, or a man a girl. Earnest Communicants, who put their religion first and are not ashamed to shew that they really care, will generally at that time be able to influence the one who loves them. But if they are willing to give up their known religious duties, they are not likely to have any influence in these ways later. A happy marriage is one begun by an earnest Communion together on the marriage day, and lived in a united endeavour to please and serve God. There is indeed good hope that the children of such a marriage will be a source of happiness to their parents, that they will have here on earth that joy which no man taketh from them, and that after this short life the earthly family will be reunited in the joys of the life to come.

Then there are also what are known as the Vows of Religion : that is to say the Vows which a Religious takes of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. The Religious Life is not merely a life given up to good works which might be taken up for a time and then relinquished. It is far more than that : the ring which the Religious wears is the outward symbol showing that the solemn Vows which bind her to Christ are as binding and permanent as the marriage vows.

Every Catholic should have a clear knowledge of the meaning of a Vocation to the Religious Life. Always from the first days there has been this Vocation in the Church, always therefore the possibility of refusing to respond. We see how it came to the rich young man, "Sell all that thou hast" (St. Luke xviii. 22) ; the call to Holy Poverty, "Come" ; the call to Holy Obedience, "Follow me" ; the call to Holy Chastity : the entire surrender of earthly possessions, of earthly love and home, and greatest of all, because most costly, the gift of the will. It is the highest call that can come to any human being. It is not a call to any special work. Religious do not

make any kind of work their particular object, it is a call to give themselves wholly to God to be used as he wills.

It does not mean that those who are called to this life are better than others. One often hears people say that they "should never be good enough." But God does not call us because we are good; all that he asks is that *if* he calls we should hear and do our best to respond. When the Call comes we must not put it away, however afraid or unworthy we may feel: to do so would be to resist the Holy Ghost. Any who find the thought coming to them again and again would do well to consult their Confessor or some Religious whom they know.

The Religious Life does mean a whole-hearted giving of self. The poorest person has something he can call his own, that no one can take from him, the Religious possesses nothing. Their clothes, the books and necessities they are allowed to keep belong to their Community, and are at the disposal of their Superior. They can never know the joys of home life, they give up voluntarily all such possibilities, and the will of each is given up to God, for his sake, who was poor and lonely, and who came not to do his own will. This is the life to which those called to be Religious give themselves, to which at their Profession they bind themselves by Life Vows, and in which they learn increasingly the truth of our Lord's promise, "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children or lands for my sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold *now in this time*" (St. Mark xv. 29, 30).

One word more on this subject. Those to whom the Call to the Religious Life comes must be prepared to meet with opposition. When our Lord speaks of leaving home ties, obviously he did not mean that there would be no suffering in the leaving. We must remember too that he cannot will what is good for one and bad for another, and if he calls us he can also help and comfort those whom we leave, and lead them to a willing share in the sacrifice and so draw them nearer to himself. Generally speaking, one may say that if it is right to leave our home for an earthly marriage (and there may be cases where it is not) it is no less right to leave it if the call comes to the Religious Life.

There are also the Ordination Vows, by which in the Sacrament of Holy Orders those called to the priesthood bind themselves to that state for life. A Priest, like a Religious, can never be anything but a Priest, he may be unfaithful to his life and holy calling, but he is a Priest none the less, and by his priestly Vocation he will be judged.

There are other vows, and sometimes those unable through health to enter Religious Communities are allowed to live a dedicated life in the world and bind themselves to it by Vows, but this of course should never be done except under Obedience and after due preparation and discipline.

We will now return to the Baptismal Vows, having only thought of other vows first in order to shew that all vows are binding in the most solemn way, and that therefore everyone is bound to keep his Baptismal Vows. Sometimes people have a wrong idea about Confirmation and think that they are not bound by their Baptismal Vows until they have taken them for themselves publicly at Confirmation. This is not so, they are binding from the first.



CHAPTER III

BAPTISMAL VOWS

THE FIRST VOW

“FIRST THAT I SHOULD RENOUNCE THE DEVIL AND ALL HIS WORKS, THE POMPS AND VANITIES OF THIS WICKED WORLD, AND ALL THE SINFUL LUSTS OF THE FLESH ”

IN this first Vow the promise is to renounce or have nothing to do with all that we know to be sin. This does not mean that we promise never to sin, that would be promising impossibilities. It means to give up all *wilful* sin, things which we know to be wrong. No one need sin wilfully and deliberately. Some people go through life without ever committing a mortal sin against their Baptismal Vows. By a mortal sin we mean a sin about which there is knowledge, deliberation, an act of the will and grave matter. In a sin of this kind the Church teaches that there must be special Confession and Sacramental Absolution before returning to Communion. Sins which do not come under this definition are called “venial sins” and should also be confessed but need not necessarily hinder Communion.

There *never is and never can be* any sin which should keep us from Communion altogether ; we can always make our Confession, receive Absolution, and come back to Communion.

We are breaking this Vow if we know what is right and deliberately do what is wrong.

“Pomps and Vanities” mean things which have no value in themselves, caring too much about dress and amusements, or money, or such things as admiration and praise. The “World” implies here what we mean when we speak of a person being worldly, one who puts the world first and does not judge things

from God's standpoint. We must not care so much for people or things that they take the place of God in our hearts, and we must be careful not to be influenced wrongly by others, or by fear of ridicule.

"The sinful lusts of the flesh," that is sinful desires. For instance, sleep is right and necessary, but to indulge in it wrongly leads to the deadly sin of sloth. Hunger and thirst are not wrong, but over-indulgence leads to greed and intemperance. Any impurity in thought or in deed comes under this heading, and in such temptations the only safeguard is to turn the thoughts away at once. It is often helpful to make the Sign of the Cross secretly over the heart, and then turn resolutely to something else. Nearly all sins of this kind are deadly (mortal) sins or akin to them, sins that is which destroy the soul, unless repented of and forsaken. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth" (Col. iii. 5). It sometimes seems hard that we must mortify our bodily desires all our lives, but in the end it will be found that the disciplined life is the happiest and that self-indulgence never brings lasting happiness.

None can feel they are being true to this part of their Baptismal Vows if they are wilfully running into temptation, by reading bad books, going to see plays or pictures which are immoral, or, worst of all, associating with bad companions or speaking of wrong things. It requires much courage to speak out when one hears wrong things said, or to refuse to laugh at stories or jokes which are not nice. But we are untrue to our Lord and false to our Vow if we do not make a stand against these things openly.

There is no sin by which we may so easily destroy not only our own souls but the souls and bodies of others as by giving way to the evil desires of the flesh. It is only by real self-discipline in avoiding temptations and the regular use of the Sacraments that we can keep right or retrace our footsteps if we have sinned. It is the devil's worst lie that purity is not possible to man or woman, it is hardly less evil when he tells us that having sinned we can never be cleansed again.

We must remember that our bodies are the temples of the Holy

Ghost, made holy in Baptism and one day to be reunited to our souls in the life which is eternal.

The first Baptismal Vow does involve self-discipline of mind and body, but we cannot feel that it is a thing about which we have any choice; we are bound by our Vows, by the keeping of them we shall be judged, and none of us can say then that we did not know their meaning.

THE SECOND VOW

“SECONDLY THAT I SHOULD BELIEVE ALL THE ARTICLES OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH ”

In the second Vow we promise that we will believe “ All the articles of the Christian Faith,” and these articles are found in the Apostles’ Creed. We were baptised in the Name of the Most Holy Trinity, and belief in the Holy Trinity is the foundation of the Apostles’ Creed; in it are found all the fundamental and necessary doctrines of the Catholic Faith. This creed was so called because it was founded on the teaching of the Apostles themselves; the longer Creed which we say at Mass is simply an enlargement of the Apostles’ Creed, with its doctrines more fully explained. It was found that after a time false teaching and doctrines were beginning to arise, and so a great Council of the Church was held at Nicæa at which this longer creed was first drawn up, that is why it is called the Nicene Creed.

This Vow implies that we must have a real and intelligent understanding of the doctrines we profess to believe. Otherwise we cannot really say that we do believe all the articles of the Christian Faith. So we must not only believe the Creed, but take pains to be well-instructed believers, able to give an answer concerning the faith that is in us.

The chief means for our instruction are the Bible, the Church, sermons, instructions, books, and teachers, therefore we need not be ignorant. Priests are always glad to help any of their people who are in difficulties, and while we should not be content to take things second-hand, as it were, but should bring our own

minds and brains to bear upon the things which concern our religion, yet it is well to bear in mind that Priests have given years to the special study of these questions, and therefore are more likely to be able to understand the meaning of the Bible and the mind of the Church than those who have not. We should go to a doctor who had studied the science of medicine for advice about any medical question, to a lawyer for advice on points of law, and we should certainly go to a Priest—one whom we know to be learned and who teaches and practises the Catholic Faith in its fulness—about any question concerning religion which puzzles us. Theology is the only science on which people who have not studied it think themselves capable of giving an opinion, and the most ignorant people will say that they do not believe this or agree with that, in matters which have been held by the whole Catholic Church from the days of the Apostles and early Fathers.

There are two dangers to be guarded against. One is that of refusing to consider anything beyond the teaching in which we have been brought up, the other is that of adopting practices without really understanding why we do so. The remedy is to have an open mind and an intelligent interest about the things which concern our Faith. People go for instance to a Church where there is much ceremonial to which they have not been accustomed, and without asking for explanation or trying to understand, say that they “do not like” that Church. They should remember two things: first that we do not go to Church for what we like, but to give God worship and honour, and it would certainly seem from both the Old and New Testament that God does care for beauty in worship. We have the most careful directions given for the worship of the Temple, and again in the New Testament, in the vision which St. John saw of the worship of Heaven, there was everything which makes for beauty in worship, the golden Altar, the candlesticks, the Angel with the censer out of which went up “much incense.” It surely seems right that we should give God our very best, not that we should do all we can for our own homes and leave God’s House bare.

And the second point is that if we study the matter at all we

shall find every rite or ceremony has its own beautiful and helpful meaning. Take for instance the Sign of the Cross, a meaningless outward form until you come to understand that it is to those who use it what a soldier's colours are to him. When in Holy Baptism the Priest signs the child with the Sign of the Cross in Holy Water on its forehead, he says, "We do sign thee with the sign of the Cross in token that thou shalt not be afraid to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto thy life's end." These inspiring words may be taken as the best explanation of the sign of the Cross at all times. It is a token that we are not ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified. The Cross was a token of shame till our Lord consecrated it by his death, it was to the Jews what the gallows are to us. But now the Cross is our glory, so we use it at the end of any Confession of our Faith, such as the Creeds and the Invocation. The early Christians used the sign of the Cross more than we do, when they went out or came in, at the beginning of any enterprise and in any time of temptation, and we may well follow their example. Only we must take care that we do not lose its meaning, and that, not only in outward symbol but in reality, we do set ourselves to follow our crucified Lord and Master, and see that our Faith and our practice are equally true to him.

THE THIRD VOW

"THIRDLY THAT I SHOULD KEEP GOD'S HOLY WILL AND COMMANDMENTS, AND WALK IN THE SAME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE"

The third vow is a Vow of Obedience to God, "to keep his holy Will and Commandments." It is not enough to avoid wrong, we are bound to obey God actively and do all the things we know to be right, our duty, what is due to God from us.

All the ordinary "duties" of our life and station are included in this Vow, and all things which belong to the practice of our religion, such as regular morning and evening prayer, nightly self-examination, attendance at Mass on all Sundays and great

festivals, regular Communion and Confessions, also the observance of the Church's fasts and almsgiving according to our means. Everyone should set apart a definite portion of his money (a tenth part was the Jewish rule) to give as alms, and should take pains to see that it is given in the best possible way, and that Foreign Mission work has a definite share.

We know God's will from the Church and from the Bible, through the voice of his Priests and from those whom God has set over us. The only time when it would not be right to obey those in authority over us is when their orders are obviously contrary to the will of God, if, for instance, we are told to lie or steal or to break our fast before Communion, or not to go to Confession when we know we ought. Then we must obey God's will rather than man's.

“YES, VERILY, AND BY GOD'S HELP SO I WILL, AND I HEARTILY
THANK OUR HEAVENLY FATHER THAT HE HATH CALLED ME
TO THIS STATE OF SALVATION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR
SAVIOUR ”

“Verily,” that is to say “indeed.” We must go over in our minds something of what this promise means which we own ourselves bound to fulfil. It means a promise to renounce sin, to have a right faith, to try and do God's Holy Will, all this we own in this answer that we are *bound* to do. We have been thinking how serious a thing a Vow is, and having realised all that the Baptismal Vows mean, it is well sometimes to make a self-examination on them and see if there is anything we are allowing ourselves to do which we know to be wrong, or leaving undone which we know to be right. It is only by the help of God that we can keep our vows, if we ask his help earnestly he will not fail us.

“State of Salvation.” To be in a state of salvation means to be in a state of spiritual health. It is quite a different thing from what those people mean who say “they know they are saved.” That is most presumptuous; up to the end of our lives we cannot say that we know we are saved, and no one else can

know either. Even St. Paul said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. ii. 12), and speaking of himself, "*not as though I had already attained*" (Phil. iii. 12). A person might be in a perfectly good state of health, but if he did things that were injurious to his health he would not continue to keep well. So we are in a state of spiritual health after our Baptism, but it will depend on our correspondence with the grace of God as to whether we remain in it to the end.

All we know is that if we are honestly trying to keep our Baptismal Vows, if we are earnest, regular Communicants, if we are really penitent for our sins, we may humbly hope to be saved. In one sense penitence matters more than anything. For if we are truly sorry for our sins we certainly shall not be careless about our Vows. Our Lord will never refuse to accept anyone who is sorry for his sins and realises that they cost him his Death and Passion. Nothing helps us so much in the realisation of the sinfulness of sin as consideration of the Passion. As we look at the Crucifix and think of all it means we realise more and more what our sins of pride and selfishness and neglect of God have meant to him.

"It was my pride and hardness
That hung him on the tree,
Those cruel nails, O Saviour,
Were driven in by me."

It is the thought of the Passion more than anything else which should bring us to Sacramental Confession. Not so much to gain help for ourselves, that is a selfish view, but because we long to do something hard to shew our Lord that we are really sorry for the sins which caused his Death, and because we want our souls cleansed, so that they may be a little less unworthy of his Presence when he comes to us in our Communion.

"AND I PRAY UNTO GOD TO GIVE ME HIS GRACE, THAT I MAY
CONTINUE IN THE SAME UNTO MY LIFE'S END"

The grace of God is given to us through the Sacraments. If we do not use them, we cannot expect to remain in a "State of

Salvation," to be right with God at the end. Remember in connection with this, that although it would never be right or even safe to put off repentance, for God's last call may come at any time, yet none should keep away from God because of past sin. However wrong we may have been, even if there has been terrible sin, we can always go to Confession and return to Communion. If it were not for the blessed fact of absolution we might well feel hopeless sometimes. When Satan can tempt us, perhaps, to no further sin, he tempts us to feel that we are now so far away from God that we cannot get right; it is the devil's own lie; we can always make our Confession and come back to our Lord in Communion.

Holy Baptism is naturally followed by the Sacraments of Penance and Confirmation, and the second of the two great Sacraments "generally necessary to salvation," Holy Communion.



CHAPTER IV

PENANCE

IN Holy Baptism God cleanses the soul from all stain of original sin and those who are baptised as adults are cleansed from all their sins, actual as well as original, if they come to the Sacrament with faith and penitence.

The greatest need of the English nation as a whole is a deeper sense of sin and a more real penitence, and perhaps the saddest thing we can ever hear is when someone tells us that they have never done anything wrong in their lives ; such people have a terrible awakening before them.

Most of us were baptised as infants and have long since stained our white baptismal robe with sin ; we do not pass one day without some sin of thought, word, or deed. A child begins to sin consciously very early in life. We may smile over the sins of childhood, but they are often the very real beginnings of such serious sins as anger, lying, stealing, or impurity. Even those we speak of as " little sins " accumulate and spoil the whiteness of the soul as fine dust gathers in an empty room. We must remember, when we consider these things, that God has given us no reason to think that the last six commandments are more important than the first four. People consider that murder and stealing are sins, but not making idols (that is, putting some person or thing in the place of God), or neglecting his worship.

God wants us to realise our sins and bring them to him in true and deep penitence, which can never mean despair. Forgiveness will most surely be granted if there is true penitence. How can we be sure of our penitence ?

The first thing to do is to get some realisation of the sins of

our lives, to see for instance how many times we have neglected God, begun the day without him, said a very hurried meaningless prayer or none at all, or not gone to Holy Communion, although he who is our God and Saviour was waiting for us there. It is often a real revelation to take a single sin, the sin perhaps of anger or pride, which are two of the deadly sins, and to trace it through one's life from childhood. If this is really done carefully and prayerfully, we are not likely to be able to say we have not much to repent of ; on the contrary we shall begin to feel that there is a great deal, and we shall want to make very sure of our penitence.

Sins such as lying and stealing are easily recognised and condemned by the world. Sins of neglect of God, unkind words, bitter thoughts, moods of self-pity and depression are often hardly thought of as sins at all.

What is necessary before we can be forgiven ? Repentance and faith. We have faith, we do believe in God, but are we sure about our repentance ? To begin with, repentance does not mean feeling. Love is shewn by acts, not by feelings and emotions, and it is the same with repentance. It means a realisation of our sins and of what they cost our Lord and a readiness to act in such a way about them as shall prove that we are really penitent. It is very difficult to be sure about our repentance, yet "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (St. Luke xiii. 5). We want to be able to feel when we come to stand before our Lord for judgment, that though we have been very sinful and have often and often grieved his Sacred Heart, yet we have honestly tried to shew him we are sorry for our sins.

Before we come to the Holy Sacraments of Confirmation and Communion, or at any time in our lives when God calls us to come closer to himself, we need first to look back and examine ourselves and trace out our sins of omission and commission. If we do it earnestly and carefully we shall begin to feel that our sins are indeed an "intolerable burden," and we shall long to come to our Lord and lay them down at the foot of the Cross. Especially when sin is realised, it seems impossible to come to the Blessed Sacrament until we are cleansed. How can we dare

ask our Lord to feed our souls with his most holy Body and Blood, when those souls are stained with sin.

In Baptism our sins were washed away, we cannot be baptised again, so God in his mercy has given us another Sacrament, the Sacrament of Penance. We may hope our sins are forgiven if we do not come to this Sacrament, but it is the only certain way which our Lord has revealed to us whereby we *know* that they are.

After our Lord's Resurrection he appeared to his Apostles and breathed on them and said, "receive the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (St. John xx. 23). It is a very striking fact that our Lord's first action when he met his Apostles together after his Resurrection, was to bestow on them the power to remit or retain sins. The Apostles were the heads of the Church and they handed on the powers they had received. Ever since then every Priest at his ordination has been given this power of pronouncing God's forgiveness over sinners. He kneels before the Bishop, who lays his hands on his head with these same words, "receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God . . . whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained" (Ordination of Priests).

Ordination is one of the seven Sacraments. A Priest once ordained is a Priest for ever, consecrated and set apart by the Bishop, who is a successor of the Apostles. So that we cannot doubt that the authority to pronounce God's forgiveness over sinners is given to the priesthood, any more than we can doubt that they have the authority to consecrate the Bread and Wine in the Mass.

Again, in the Long Exhortation in the Communion Service we are told how dangerous it is to come to the Holy Communion with unforgiven sin on our conscience. How careful we must be to examine ourselves and repent. We are told, too, that if we cannot quiet our own conscience we are to go to a priest that we "may receive the benefit of Absolution." Our Prayer Book tells us that we must not dare to come unforgiven, and that there is open to us a great benefit, that of Sacramental Absolution.

Further, in the Communion of the sick, the Priest is told to "move," that is to urge, the sick person to make a special confession of sins if his conscience is troubled by any weighty matter, and we are given in this Office the form of Absolution which is used in all private Confessions. It is quite different from the form of Absolution at Mattins or Evensong or that in the Communion service. These latter are only statements that the people will be pardoned if they are penitent. The formal Absolution is quite different. When the penitent has made his Confession, the Priest says, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe on him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences, and by his authority committed unto me I absolve thee from all thy sins. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

It is absolutely definite. There is no more doubt about it in the mind of the Church than there is about the forgiveness of sin in Baptism.

No one who has studied the Prayer Book can say that Sacramental Confession is not allowed to English Church people. It is not only allowed, but it is encouraged, since to speak of anything as a "benefit" is certainly to encourage its use.

Let us now turn to the more spiritual side of this Sacrament, and see why we should use it.

We have seen how necessary it is to be *sure* of our penitence, that it is real and true and deep. If a child has done something wrong it may confess it in its prayers to God, but we think much more of its penitence if it voluntarily takes the pain and shame of confessing it also to its parents. True penitence must have some real humiliation in it, and there is very little real humiliation in the General Confession in Church. We do not find it very hard to say that we are "miserable sinners" or even to confess our sins alone to God. Therefore if we take the easy way of penitence it is difficult to be sure our penitence is real and true, and yet on its reality our forgiveness depends, and on that depends our salvation. So it is not a matter to be decided lightly.

If we are willing to do so hard a thing as confessing our sins

in the presence of a Priest, then we may be sure that our penitence is real and that, sinful as we are, we have at least done all we can to shew our Lord we are sorry for our sins. Moreover we are definitely told "confess your faults one to another" (St. James v. 16).

And if we realise that our sins cost our dear Lord his Cross and Passion, no generous soul can want to take the easier way of penitence. Rather we shall want to suffer something for the sins which cost him so much. When the knowledge comes to us that we have hurt some one we love, nothing is felt to be too hard if we can in any way make up for the pain we have given. So we may feel that we are able to make some reparation to the Sacred Heart for the wounds which we have made, when we take to ourselves the pain and shame of Confession.

Then there is the thought of Jesus coming to us in the Blessed Sacrament. He who is very God comes to our poor sinful souls, surely we shall do all we can to be made less unworthy of his Presence. It must hurt and grieve him to come to hearts that have not been cleansed from sin.

And the joy of Absolution ! We should not go to Confession from any selfish motive, yet when we have made our Confession for his honour and glory, and to make reparation for our sins, our Lord does give us great joy. No one but those who practise it can know the joy which comes when the burden of sin is taken away, and we rise from our knees clean and white as we were after our Baptism. How different the Festivals are if we have really prepared for them by a good Confession ! There is a particular joy and light-heartedness which comes to those who practise the Catholic Faith, which no one who does not can possibly know. The opponents of Sacramental Confession are usually those who know least about it, and have never practised it. We must remember that "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" (St. Luke xv. 7), and there is joy in the Sacred Heart of Jesus when any of his children make a brave true Confession, bearing pain and humiliation for his sake, who died on the Cross for our sins. "If we say that we have no sin, we

deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness " (1 St. John i. 8, 9).

The way to prepare for a First Confession is to begin by setting apart a definite time for preparation (a week is generally long enough). Find time every day to be quiet and alone before beginning self-examination, and ask for the help of God the Holy Ghost : " Come, Holy Ghost, and help me to see my sins, to see myself as I am in God's sight." Then go through the whole life, beginning with childhood, schooldays, home life, youth, later life, and write down the sins which memory recalls from the first serious sins of childhood.

We should go through our whole life carefully and prayerfully, writing down the sins of each part of it as we remember them. Such things as, " When I was a child I cheated over my lessons " (say whether frequently or occasionally) or " told lies," " as a girl I was constantly selfish at home," " all my life I have given way to my temper, it has led me to strike others, to use bad language, etc.," " I have been self-indulgent and slothful about getting up and have missed my morning prayer many times." Think also of sins of character as well as those more serious and definite sins which we can remember. After this it is best to take some book with self-examination questions (they will be found in any Manual) and go through them to see that nothing has been forgotten. If doubtful whether an action was wrong, confess it.

We should be careful to be quite plain and simple in our Confessions, telling our sins to our Lord simply and plainly, without covering anything up, remembering that it is to him we make our Confession, though we make it before the Priest, and he gives us God's message of pardon. To leave out deliberately any sin in Confession is the sin of sacrilege, it is lying to God and one of the worst sins we can commit. But if after careful preparation and Confession we remember some sin we have really forgotten, we need not be troubled, it is enough to mention it in our next Confession.

In many Churches there is a list in the porch of the times when

Confessions are heard, and in this case it is not necessary to make an appointment. It is always easy in such Churches to see where the Priest is hearing Confessions and just go and kneel down there when one's turn comes. Any good Manual has in it the form of Confession, a short form, beginning, "I confess to God the Father," and having said that from the Manual, tell our Lord all the sins which you had written down, ending by completing the form from the book, ". . . for these and all my other sins which I cannot now remember . . ."

The Priest then gives the penitent "counsel," that is, advice and help about these sins. (Remember that Priests have the care of our souls as doctors have the care of our bodies, they are the right people to go to for spiritual help and advice.) The Priest will then give as penance some prayer or collect, etc., to be said. It is important to remember carefully what penance we are told to say. Penances nowadays are usually very light, but they are a token to God that we are willing to take something hard, and we receive Absolution on condition of performing our penance.

Then the Priest pronounces the Absolution, and we bow our heads and feel that we are indeed kneeling at the foot of the Cross, and the Blood of Jesus Christ is cleansing our souls from sin. We rise from our knees knowing that all our sins are washed away, and before leaving the Church say our penance and make our thanksgiving for the blessed Gift of Absolution.

We have thought of the first two parts of penitence, Contrition and Confession. There still remains the third very important part, Amendment or Satisfaction. After we have confessed our sins, the form of Confession continues, ". . . for these and all my other sins, which I cannot now remember and for those I know not of, I am heartily sorry, firmly purpose amendment." A firm purpose of amendment is a necessary part of penitence, and all true penitents are bound to make special efforts about the sins which most easily beset them. Acts of self-discipline should be used in correcting "little sins." Penance (beyond the penance given in Confession) should only be

undertaken under the direction of the Confessor. The Saints were almost invariably led to the practice of penance, the great love for God which they had in their hearts urging them to offer suffering in union with the suffering of Christ, not only for their own sins but for those of others, in what is called "Reparation." St. Paul speaks of Reparation when he says, "I rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his Body's sake, which is the Church" (Col. i. 24); and when, with St. Paul, we are allowed to add penance to our prayer, we are endeavouring with him to take part in the great and holy work of Reparation.

At a Church where there is a daily or frequent Mass we may be sure that the Priests will be ready to hear Confessions, and we can easily write to ask for an appointment. It is not necessary even to know the name, a letter addressed to "The Revd. the Vicar," at the Vicarage or Clergy House, is quite sufficient.

Sometimes in the beginning of our spiritual life it is all made so easy for us, and then after a time we let it all drop for want of taking a little trouble, or from some feeling of shyness. We must never give up the use of any Sacrament. If we are in real difficulties, we can write to a Sister or Priest we have known, or speak to any Sister we see in the street, or the Priest in any Church where the Catholic Faith is taught, and they will always gladly help.

After the first Confession is the best time to ask the Priest how often we should come to Confession. There should be a regular time for it, though this need not prevent an extra Confession at any time when it is needed.

Those who are brought to the Sacraments when they are quite young have a great advantage over others, for they form a habit then which they are much less likely to break. The life of many a boy and girl is saved from moral and spiritual ruin by their being taught to make their Confession when they are still children, and many a girl and young man who have fallen into sin and gone astray, can thank God that they were taught the use of this Sacrament in childhood, so that when at last their heart is touched

and the long-forgotten teaching comes back to them, they know that the way of return is open, that they may still come to their Saviour and be cleansed from all their sin in his most precious Blood in the Sacrament of penance.

The frequency of our Confessions and Communions is a matter to be settled by the Priest and we should not increase or diminish them without his sanction.



CHAPTER V

CONFIRMATION

OUR Christian life began at our Baptism. But as we grow older fresh temptations and difficulties arise, and we need more strength to fight the battle of life. So God gives us the Sacrament of Confirmation, in which God the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Blessed Trinity, comes to give us spiritual strength. We read of the first Confirmation in Acts viii., when St. Philip, who was a Deacon, having baptised many of the Samaritans, St. Peter and St. John, who were Apostles and the first Bishops of the Church, went from Jerusalem to Samaria to confirm them. "Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost" (Acts viii. 17).

We are also told by St. Paul, "stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim. i. 6). Confirmation is the Gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles and their successors the Bishops. It is the Holy Ghost who gives us strength to fight against temptations, who gives us good thoughts and desires, who guides and enlightens our conscience, who gives us light to see our sins as they are in God's sight.

" And every virtue we possess,
And every conquest won,
And every thought of holiness
Are his alone."

It is a beautiful sevenfold gift which we receive in Confirmation: the gift of Wisdom which leads us to be wise unto salvation and to love God above all, the Gift of Understanding which helps us to understand the truths of the Catholic Faith, the Gift of Counsel which shows us how to choose what is for God's

glory and the good of our souls, Ghostly Strength which gives power to resist evil, Knowledge which teaches us to know what is right and what is wrong, Godliness which teaches us to love God and do his Will, and Holy Fear which teaches us to reverence God because we love him and he is so good to us.

All this God gives in Confirmation, and after it we can, if we will, conquer in his strength. So that we see it cannot be right to keep back boys and girls from what will be so great a help to them at a time in their lives when temptation is increasingly strong.

Before the Gift is bestowed, those about to be Confirmed renew their Baptismal Vows before God, and the Bishop and congregation. So that they are from thenceforth full-grown Christians, fully enlisted in the army of Christ, whose servants and children they are.

The Church of England orders that whenever it is possible all shall be confirmed before they come to Holy Communion. This is only a matter of Church order and discipline. In the Greek Church children are Confirmed and given Holy Communion immediately after Baptism, and in the Latin Church Confirmation generally follows the First Communion. It follows that Confirmation before Communion is not an absolute necessity, but what is necessary is that those who come to Holy Communion should be "willing and desirous to be Confirmed." Therefore if a person is dying, Confirmation may be impossible, and Communion would never be withheld on that account; nor if for any other real reason Confirmation was unattainable at the time. But it is absolutely against the rule of the Church to admit to Holy Communion those who have no intention of being Confirmed and no belief in the Apostolic Ministry. This is a breach of the Catholic Order of the whole Church.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Holy Communion is the second of the two great Sacraments which are "generally necessary to Salvation," that is, necessary "in general," necessary for all those who have the opportunity of knowing about them.

We may indeed say that the whole of our religion centres round these two great Sacraments, because through them we are brought into closest permanent union with God.

The Holy Communion was instituted by our Lord himself the night before his Crucifixion. It seems almost, if we may say it reverently, as though he had left it until then, knowing that all he said on that last sad night must be impressed on the hearts of his Apostles for ever. They had already had some teaching about this great Sacrament. Our Lord had told them that he was the true Bread from Heaven, of which if any man ate he would live for ever, and had said to them those solemn words, so often disregarded now, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, ye *have no life in you*" (St. John vi. 53).

Many refused to believe it then, as many do now, and we remember how almost wistfully our Lord turned to his little band of followers and asked them, "Will ye also go away?" (St. John vi. 67)—as though he longed that they at least should not reject the Sacrament of his love.

Then on that last night, the Thursday in Holy Week, Maundy Thursday, as we call it now, he took the Bread and the Wine and gave it to them saying the words of Consecration, "This is my Body . . ." (St. Matt. xxvi. 26, 28), "This is my Blood: do this (that is, 'offer this') in remembrance of me" (St. Luke xxii. 19). And his Church has ever obeyed this injunction. Since that first night the Church of God has believed and taught that whenever a priest says these words of Consecration over the Bread and Wine, Jesus, who is very God himself, comes according to his promise, veiled from our earthly sight under the forms of Bread and Wine. We know that he is there, we worship him present on the Altar, we receive his Body and Blood as the food of our souls. As the Catechism teaches, the outward form of this Sacrament is "Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received;" the inward part is "the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful."

We believe therefore, from our Lord's own words and the teaching of his Church, that in the Holy Communion he

comes to feed us with his own most precious Body and Blood. He has told us too that without this Holy Food our souls cannot live. "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, ye have no life in you" (St. John vi. 53).

We cannot judge those who have not known or realised these things, but how can those who have known hope to be saved, if they disobey our Lord's plain command? He gives us the greatest joy and privilege that even his great love can conceive, the Gift of himself in our Communion. He gives himself to us to feed our sinful souls with his own Body and Blood, to come closer to us than he was to his Blessed Mother in their earthly home. And too often we will not trouble to accept his Gift, we are cold or indifferent, or we feel unworthy and yet will not face the pain of penitence and Confession. We may come to him even here and now, and know him in close union; or we may reject him and have one day to hear those awful words, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

We cannot be too careful in preparing for the Holy Communion, and it is well sometimes to read over the long Exhortation in the Prayer Book which tells us how "dangerous a thing it is to come to that most Holy Sacrament" in unrepented sin. It is right always to prepare by prayer and self-examination. Everyone should make a habit each night of thinking over the day and confessing all that he has done wrong in thought, word, and deed. Then it is not difficult to make a special self-examination before Communion, but one Communion is often the best preparation for another, and no one should feel satisfied until he is able to live sufficiently carefully and prayerfully to come to his Communion every Sunday and greater Holy Day at the very least.

From the very first days of the Church it has always been the rule that the Blessed Sacrament should be received fasting: that is, that no food or drink whatever may be taken from midnight the night before. The chief exceptions to this rule are the Viaticum or last Communion of the dying, and that of soldiers in war-time.

English Church people sometimes think that they are unable

to keep this rule ; but as it is kept by the whole of both the Eastern and the Western Church, it seems hardly likely that the members of the English Church alone are too delicate to observe it ! For those who are really delicate, some food taken at bed-time or just before midnight is often a help. But it is chiefly a matter of habit, and of whether we have enough love and obedience to offer this small act of self-denial out of reverence to our Lord. It does also seem more fitting that that Holy Food should be taken before any other.

It is well also, so far as we can, to be quiet and silent before Communion, so that our thoughts may not be distracted.

Manuals which will be found helpful for preparation are : "The English Portuary," "Let Us Pray," "The Pilgrim's Path," "Catholic Prayers," "The Christian's Handy Book of Prayer," "The Christian's Companion," "The Altar Book," and "St. Swithin's Prayer Book." These all contain preparation for the Sacraments and private prayers.

So far we have thought only of one aspect of the Mass, the Communion, when we receive the Body and Blood of Christ, without which our souls cannot live. There is also the *Sacrificial* side. Our Lord by his Priest shews forth to God the Father the sacrifice of his Death on Calvary. We see in the Host (the Consecrated Bread), the Body broken on Calvary, and in the Wine the Blood poured forth on Calvary, presented to God the Father, pleading Christ's sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

"And so we show thy Death, O Lord, till thou thyself appear,
And feel, when we approach thy Board, we have an Altar here."

The Priest, as our representative, offers the great Christian Sacrifice to God the Father, the Lamb as it had been slain, and we join with him in pleading the Death of Christ before God. We worship him present on the Altar, and there, in the presence of Angels and Archangels, we plead his Death, not only for our sins but for the needs and sins of others. As St. Augustine wrote, "How shall we not prevail with God when that great and awful Sacrifice lies displayed !" When we are present at the

Eucharistic Sacrifice we are in the close presence of one whom we love, and we have our part to do. We are there to join with the Priest in the offering of the Sacrifice, whenever we go to "assist at Mass." We go to our Communion that our souls may be strengthened and fed. We go to be present at Mass, that we may offer adoration and thanksgiving as well as prayer and penitence.

It is the rule of the Church and the privilege and duty of all the baptised, that every one should be present at Mass on Sundays and greater Holy Days. These are called Days of Obligation. The Mass is the one only Service which was instituted by our Lord himself; therefore it should take precedence of all others. "The Lord's own service on the Lord's own day for God's own children." No baptised person has kept Sunday rightly who has not been to Mass; unless unavoidably prevented it is a grave sin to miss.

But we want to get away from the attitude of those who only do what they are obliged. If our Lord comes to be present on the Altar, it should be our joy and privilege to go to meet him there. Should we not go with joy to visit one whom we greatly love? There is no other way (except in Communion) by which we can come so near, no better way to plead for those we love.

"And then, for those our dearest and our best,
By this prevailing Presence we appeal."

There are various titles given to the Holy Communion, all teaching different aspects.

The title "Holy Communion" speaks of the Communion, that is the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ.

"The Holy Eucharist" teaches us that the Sacrament is a means of thanksgiving (the word means *thanksgiving*), and so speaks of the blessed gifts of his Body and Blood, the reason of thanksgiving.

"The Holy Sacrifice" speaks of the sacrificial aspect.

"The Lord's Supper" reminds us of its institution.

There is only one name which gathers into one and embraces all sides of the great Service, and that is Holy Mass.

This name has been used from the earliest times, and it is woven into the history of the English Church. In the first Prayer Book of Edward VI after the Reformation, we find the title "The service of Holy Communion, commonly called the Mass," and the word has always been preserved in such Festivals as Christ-mas, Michael-mas, Candle-mas. Although there is no real necessity to use this title in preference to others, the use of it does emphasize the fact that there was no break in the continuity of the Sacraments at the Reformation. The Blessed Sacrament is the same now as it has always been ; there has been no break since the days of the Apostles. The outward form of the Mass is different in some ways, as it was translated into English, but it is the same Sacrament. It is not a fact that Roman Catholics have the Mass and we have something different. We, as well as they, have the same Sacrament that has always been, and we emphasize this belief by claiming the Mass for ourselves.

There is another way in which we may come to worship our Lord present under the Sacramental veils of Bread and Wine, and that is in those Churches where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

That is to say, that after the people are communicated at Mass, a certain portion of the Consecrated Bread is reserved for the Communion of any who cannot receive it during Mass. Where this is not done, it may often happen that people die without their Communion, without that most Holy Food to help them on their last journey. The holy Sacrament must always be treated with the greatest reverence, since it is our Lord himself. Sometimes there is a separate Chapel for it and on the Altar a Tabernacle, in which the Sacred Host is placed in a vessel called a Pyx. A lamp is kept burning before it day and night, to tell of the Presence there.

It is a *most* helpful practice to "visit" our Lord in the Tabernacle and kneel in prayer before him. There are few large towns now where there are not Churches where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, and even the busiest people can, if they will, find a few moments to go and kneel in his Presence. In difficulty or in

sorrow, in weariness or sadness, we shall find that daily "visit" the greatest help to our souls. When we realise our Lord is there, we shall not willingly neglect to visit him.

In many Churches "Devotions" before the Blessed Sacrament are held, when the faithful have the opportunity, not only of silent worship and thanksgiving, but of common worship in hymn and prayer.

Jesus "lifted up" in the Blessed Sacrament as on the Cross, draws all men unto him, and while it should be clearly understood that the purpose of the Consecration at every Mass is for Communion, those who realise our Lord's Presence in the Blessed Sacrament will naturally be drawn to pay him honour there. It is in those Churches where this is most fully recognised, that the greatest number of faithful communicants will also be found.

There is only one day in the year when the Holy Communion is not celebrated, that is Good Friday. As on Good Friday the One great Sacrifice was offered, so on this day only, our thoughts are fixed on the Sacrifice on Calvary, and we are purposely deprived of its representation on earth.

On Maundy Thursday (the name comes from the first words of the Latin for "A new commandment I give unto you," St. John xiii. 34), it is customary (for these ancient ceremonies are now being revived in many Churches) to carry the Blessed Sacrament away from the Altar with ceremony. Where this is done a procession, with incense, is made to an "Altar of Repose." After the Mass the other Altars are stripped, reminding us of the Death on Calvary. But the Altar of Repose alone in the Church is beautiful with lights and flowers, testifying to the glorious fact that Christ has conquered death and that we have his Sacramental Presence with us to the end of the world. In some places the members of the Communicants' Guilds undertake the decking of the Altar of Repose with flowers.

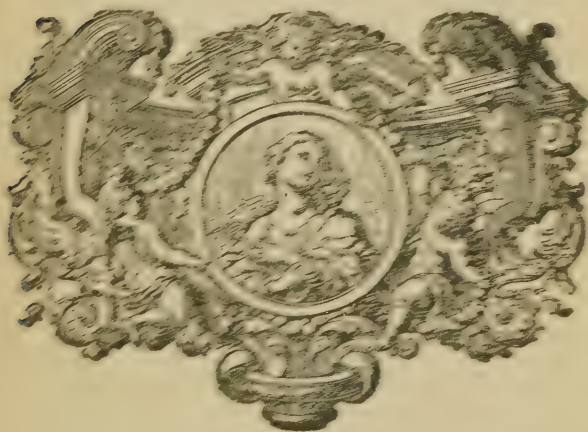
On Good Friday the only Mass that can be held is the Mass of the Pre-sanctified. In the Mass of the Pre-sanctified a Host, consecrated on Maundy Thursday, is carried to the Altar from the Altar of Repose, and the Priest alone communicates.

On Easter Eve we have the First Mass of Easter, the

Ascension Mass as it is called. This used to be at about five o'clock in the afternoon, but in modern days it has been placed earlier to shorten the fast.

When the ancient ceremonies have been restored, the Mass is preceded by the *Kierling* of the *Seven Fire* and the *Blessing* of the *Fire*. (All lights are extinguished after the Mass on Maundy Thursday, and all Holy Water washed away. This is celebrated on *Passer Day*. Holy Water is then again set aside for the *Light* of the *Seven*, and lamps are relighted from the *kindled* freely by a *flint*.)

From this time the *Seven* is also lighted the *Parish Candle*, signifying the *Resurrection* of the *Seven* which came into the world on *Easter Day*. It is used at Mass and other special services until after the Gospel on *Ascension Day*.



CHAPTER VI

THE CREED

THE word "Creed" comes from the Latin "*Credo*," I believe, or have faith in.

Our Faith ought to mean a great deal to us. It is, for instance, a good thing sometimes to think how much it does mean, if we should really be willing to die rather than deny our Lord? Faith is and ought to be to us the greatest thing in the world, yet nowadays people are far from being ready to face martyrdom; very often they cannot even bear a little unpopularity or ridicule in standing up for the right. Whenever we give in because we are afraid of what others will say we are denying the Lord Jesus. That is one reason why it is a helpful practice to make the sign of the Cross: it is just a token to ourselves and others that we are not ashamed to confess the Faith of Christ crucified. It is one of the greatest temptations to many to give up their religious duties because others do not practise them, and if we persevere in little outward tokens of our reverence and faith it is a help to ourselves and often an encouragement to others, who see that perhaps when they thought themselves alone, there are others like-minded. The Catholic Faith is a most true bond of union between its followers.

Everything in the Creed is of absolutely vital importance, and no one is really a Christian who does not believe every sentence of it with his whole heart. It is a real sin even to talk as though we did not believe, or to throw any doubts on the faith of others. We must remember too that "faith

without works is dead" (St. James ii. 20): our faith must bear practical fruit in our lives.

" I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER "

Do we really believe in God as our Father? We believe in God, of course, but do we believe in any practical way that he is our Father? Many of us have had earthly fathers who meant a great deal to us, and even those who have not can form an idea of what a father should be: one who is kind and just, who cares for all our interests and well-being, one whom we love much and trust entirely, who deserves our respect and deference, whom we obey, and who is yet not too far above us to care for all our joys and sorrows, who we are quite sure will be interested in all that concerns us. All that, and much more than that, is meant when we speak of God as our Father. It is well to try and realise this when we say " I believe in God the Father," and " Our Father," and to remember that he is indeed our loving Father, who cares about everything that concerns us. A child cannot always understand what the father does. Often the dealings of an earthly parent seem hard to his child, but if there is real love he trusts his father through it all. When we cannot understand God's dealings, we must trust, instead of rebelling and saying that he cannot love us. If we will only trust him, some day we shall understand, and we cannot really doubt his love, since he gave his Son to die for us.

" ALMIGHTY "

That is, all-powerful, able to do all he wills. There is only one thing that God cannot do, and that is anything wrong, for that would be against his own Nature.

" MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH "

We know how beautiful the Earth is which God has made: we cannot even imagine the joy and beauty of Heaven.

“ AND IN JESUS CHRIST ”

There was never a time when the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity did not exist, but there was a time when he did not exist as Man. At the Incarnation God was made Man, and united in himself the Godhead and Manhood. This is called the Hypostatic (Personal) Union, and is typified by the mingled Water and Wine of the Chalice.

God has made it possible that we should know him as a Person, by himself taking our human nature. We know Jesus, who comes to dwell with us in our Communions, in whose dear Presence we kneel at Mass, or before the holy Sacrament, and when we know Jesus we know God the Father also. “ He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ” (St. John xiv. 9).

In honour of the great mystery of the Incarnation when God took human flesh and for our sakes left Heaven to live our life and carry our sorrows, we kneel for a moment at the words, “ and was Incarnate,” in the Nicene Creed.

“ HIS ONLY SON ”

In one sense we are all the Sons of God, but God has only One Son who partakes of his Nature, who is “ equal to the Father as touching his Godhead.”

“ OUR LORD ”

That is our Saviour, our Redeemer, he who being very God yet came to take upon him our human nature, and died that we might live.

“ WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY GHOST ”

Our Lord had no earthly father. St. Joseph was his foster-father—a high honour, for to him was given the guardianship of our dear Lord and his Blessed Mother.

The Blessed Virgin was told, “ The Holy Ghost shall come

upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that Holy Thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God " (St. Luke i. 35).

" BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY "

The great mystery of the Virgin Birth has been a stumbling-block to some who have tried to explain it away. It is impossible to do so and remain a Catholic, since it is one of the fundamental doctrines of the Faith. It was foretold hundreds of years before in the Old Testament. " Behold, a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son " (Isaiah vii. 14).

Who was the Blessed Virgin? She was of the royal line of David. Tradition tells us that her mother was St. Anne, whose Festival we keep on July 26th. All that we know of the Blessed Virgin is that she was young, and it has always been the belief of the whole Church that she was without sin.

We do not read a great deal about our Blessed Lady in the Bible, there are not many recorded words of hers; we know she was given to meditation, " pondered them in her heart " (St. Luke ii. 19). But we do get a very clear idea of the beauty of her character from the Bible: we know that she was humble and quiet, not self-assertive, but very gentle and prayerful. The Blessed Virgin is the model for all women. We call her " Our Lady " because she is the very highest type of womanhood. This title has always been retained in the word " Lady Day," March 25th, the Feast of the Annunciation, when the Angel came to announce to her that she should be the Mother of God.

We must never forget the honour due to her. She is to all eternity the Mother of God. See how the great Archangel Gabriel addresses her. " Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women " (St. Luke i. 28). Remember how reverently Elizabeth, her aged cousin, spoke. " Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? " (St. Luke i. 43)—a mystery honoured by our Church in the Feast of the Visitation, July 2nd. What awe and reverence at the great honour paid her was put into the

mind of Blessed Elizabeth by the Holy Ghost ! And in her own inspired song, our Lady herself, although so meek and humble of heart, sings " All generations shall call me blessed " (St. Luke i. 48).

The Church does teach us to honour our Blessed Lady. There are many Festivals in her honour in our Prayer Book. The Purification, February 2nd ; the Annunciation, March 25th ; the Visitation, July 2nd ; the Nativity or Birthday of the Blessed Virgin, September 8th ; and the Conception, December 8th ; and besides these there is a Feast kept by the whole Church in honour of the day of her death, when as we believe our Lady, for whom there was no need of purification, was taken up into Heaven, the Assumption, August 15th—the Feast of the Repose of the Mother of God.

It is true that since the Reformation, until lately (and still, alas, in many Churches !), the English Church has given far less than her due to her who is universally acknowledged to be the " Mother of God." It was an English poet, Keble, who wrote of her :

" Ave Maria, thou whose name
All but adoring love may claim."

Then comes the question, May we pray to our Lady and the Saints ? the Invocation of Saints, as it is called. If we do not believe the Invocation of Saints is permissible, we are standing apart from the whole Catholic Church since the Nicene age, all the rest of Catholic Christendom to-day, and neglecting a practice which was universally accepted until the Reformation. We are really saying that a certain party in our comparatively small communion knows better than the whole of the Church. We find from the inscriptions in the Catacombs that Invocation was used in the very early days of Christianity. (The Catacombs were the underground burying-places of the early Christians in times of persecution. Services were also held there.) The early Fathers of the Church teach Invocation, and we find it also in the ancient Liturgies.

Why should we not ask our Lady's prayers just as we ask the prayers of each other ? She is in Heaven, and she is specially

dear to her Son : surely her prayers must be of great avail. And the same applies to all the Saints whose names we honour. Their prayers must be of greater efficacy than the prayers of our fellow sinners, and God can reveal our need to them. The great difference between praying to God and praying to the Saints is that we ask our Lady and the blessed Saints to pray for us, while we ask God for gifts and graces which only God can give.

The prayer to our Lady which we use most often and which everyone should know by heart, is the one known as the " Hail Mary," or " Ave Maria."

" Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,

Pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death.

Amen."

A devotion to our Lady which is often used is the Rosary of our Lady, and now that so many rosaries are being brought home from abroad, it seems well to explain its use, and so perhaps prevent a Rosary, which is meant for a sacred purpose, being used as an ornament. A Rosary is used to help our prayers and meditations on the Mysteries of our Lord's life. The Rosary of our Lady is said as follows :

Take the Crucifix attached to the Rosary, and say the Creed, then three " Hail Marys " on the three small beads, an " Our Father " on the large bead, and " Glory be to the Father " on the medal. Then begin the Decades. (The Decade is a set of ten beads.) The fifteen Mysteries are divided into three sets, the Joyful Mysteries, the Sorrowful Mysteries, and the Glorious Mysteries. These can be found in any small book on the Rosary or manual of devotion.

Take, for instance, one or two of the Sorrowful Mysteries. Think for a minute of the Agony in the Garden, see our Lord kneeling there, bowed to the earth with the weight of the sins of the world, our sins, and with that picture in mind and in honour of that Mystery, say ten " Hail Marys " on the small beads, " Our Father " on the large one, and " Glory be " on the Chain. Think in the same way of the Scourging. And so on

through all that set of Mysteries. The Rosary is a Devotion which brings home to our hearts in a wonderful way the great truths of our Holy Religion.

There are many other Rosaries besides the Rosary of our Lady. The Rosary of the Sacred Heart, of the Blessed Sacrament, and others, or one can make them for oneself. The beads are merely a help to remembering, and we say the same prayer over and over, as we say in a Litany, "We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord," many times. Many find this a helpful devotion.

We must speak of one more Devotion before leaving this clause of the Creed—the Angelus, which is said in all Religious Houses and in many Churches. The words said are as follows :

(First bell).

The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary, and she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

(Second bell).

Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary (*as before*).

(Third bell).

And the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us.

Hail Mary (*as before*).

V. Pray for us, Holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.

(Last bell).

COLLECT FOR THE ANNUNCIATION.

Let us pray.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts : that, as we have known the Incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an Angel ; so by his Cross and Passion we may be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.

We should have more happiness in our religion if we had a greater realisation of the joy which came to us through the Incarnation. "What is the Angelus but the saying of a short prayer when a bell rings? Yet years of saying it, with great love, with intense attention to GOD, with an interior spirit of jubilant thanksgiving for the Incarnation, would take us half way to Heaven."



CHAPTER VII

THE CREED—*continued*

“SUFFERED”

WE must remember when we think of this clause in our Creed that we are to follow a Crucified Saviour. Our Lord says to all of us, “Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (St. Mark viii. 34). It was not said merely to Priests and Religious, but to all: we cannot pretend to be following him if we are only living to please ourselves.

Our Lord “suffered.” All through his life he suffered, even from his infancy. He did not live an easy, self-indulgent life. Our life need not necessarily be austere and ascetic, but there must be self-denial if we profess to follow him. He never promises escape from suffering to his followers, but help and comfort in it, if they bear it willingly with him. There must be more even than the willing bearing of suffering which we cannot escape. There must be active self-denial. “Let him deny himself.”

To this end the Church and the Bible teach the duty of fasting. Our Lord himself takes it for granted. He does not say, “If ye pray,” “If ye give alms,” “If ye fast,” but “When thou prayest,” “When thou doest thine alms,” “When ye fast” (St. Matt. vi. 2, 5, 16). And again he tells his disciples that they cannot fast while they have him, but “the days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast” (St. Matt. ix. 15). We know that the Apostles fasted: “When they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them” (Acts xiii. 3). All through the ages, from Apostolic times to our own,

all the Saints have fasted, and the Church enjoins it. It is strange, therefore, how greatly this duty is neglected.

In the beginning of our Prayer Book we find the list of Days of Fasting and Abstinence to be observed.

The Forty days of Lent, which we keep in memory of our Lord's fast in the wilderness, and in penitence for our sins.

The Ember days before the Ordinations, when we pray and fast as the Apostles did for those about to be ordained.

The Rogation days, the three days before Ascension Day, when we pray for God's blessing on the harvest; the earthly harvest and the harvest of souls in the Home and Foreign Mission Field.

All Fridays in the year (except Christmas Day), in memory of the Crucifixion.

The Vigils of certain festivals.

On all these days Christians should abstain from meat, unless they are dispensed on account of hard work or ill-health. In any case they should let no fast-day pass without some definite act of self-denial, and Fridays can be observed by all. If the opinion of others should make this practice hard, then we may be glad to have a real bit of "suffering" to offer to our Lord. It is not necessary that we should be where fish is provided; a diet of vegetables and cheese can hurt no one once a week, and we can always refrain from entertainments on the day of our Lord's Death. We must be careful not to accept all the joys and privileges of the Catholic Faith and leave out the sterner side.

Lent especially should be marked with some real severity, as we think of our Lord approaching his Passion. We may not be able to endure much or any fasting from actual food, but we can all practise real self-denial in things which cost us something. It is sad to see people professing to be followers of Christ Crucified, whose only idea of keeping Lent is some childish trifle, such as refraining from sugar in their tea.

“Fasting” may include all acts of bodily mortification by which we strive to “keep under the body and bring it into subjection.”

“UNDER PONTIUS PILATE”

Pontius Pilate was the Roman Governor : he was very weak, but not really wicked or antagonistic to our Lord. We do not always think seriously of weakness, and yet it led Pontius Pilate into a sin the memory of which has been handed down, and will be handed down, throughout all generations. Wherever the Creed is repeated, east and west, in every part of the Church, there come those words, “Suffered under Pontius Pilate.” Do we not often fall into the sin of Pontius Pilate when we give way to popular opinion, or refuse to take responsibility, or to stand up for the right ? There is need of great courage in the Christian life, and moral courage is often far harder than physical.

“WAS CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED”

Our Lord chose the very hardest way in which to die for our sins. Death by crucifixion was to a Jew like death on the gallows now. On Good Friday we keep the day of his Death : surely on that day we can put pleasure aside, and spend it at the Foot of the Cross. We can only realise what sin cost our Lord, if we come and watch beside him in his Passion.

“There was none other good enough
To pay the price of sin.”

Good Friday should be set apart for the remembrance of the debt which he paid to deliver us from the utmost penalty of sin. On that day, if on no other, some real fast can be kept by all but invalids, and except where other duties call, the time can be spent in prayer and watching by the Cross. The ancient Liturgy of Good Friday is specially beautiful and helpful. The Reproaches, with the refrain over and over again, “O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee ? Testify against me,” the Veneration of the Cross, when the people draw near and kneel to kiss the foot of the Cross in token of their devotion to Jesus Christ crucified, and the

Mass of the Pre-sanctified when the Host consecrated on Maundy Thursday, is solemnly brought from the Altar of Repose to the High Altar—for there is no offering of the Holy Sacrifice on the day when the one great Sacrifice was consummated on Calvary, but the faithful may still plead before God in Eucharistic worship the death of “the Lamb as it had been slain.”

Later on Good Friday comes the Devotion of the Three Hours from twelve to three o'clock. This is comparatively modern, having been introduced by a Priest of the Society of Jesus about two hundred years ago. At this service we try to keep our watch by the Cross during the last three hours of our Lord's Crucifixion, and at three o'clock all faithful Christians remember that, at that hour, his long suffering ended at last, Jesus yielded his soul into his Father's hands.

There is also the Devotion of the Stations of the Cross. In many Churches a series of pictures of the events of the Passion and the journey to Calvary are hung or painted on the walls, and where the Devotions of the Stations of the Cross is held, a procession is formed, stopping for a few minutes before each picture, to say prayers in honour of the event which it commemorates.

People can also make the Stations of the Cross privately and it is a very useful devotion, especially in Lent.

“ DEAD ”

Our Lord, in a most real way, endured the pangs of death, the penalty of our sin, that we might be saved from eternal death. Christians should not put away from them the thought of death, since he has overcome death and taken away its sting. There is one certain fact ; that all must die, and no one of us can know the hour of our death. Therefore we should prepare for death, that we may be ready when it comes, and there is only one way in which we can make sure of dying well, and that is by living well. No one can dare to trust to the opportunity of a death-bed repentance, for no such opportunity may be given.

If we try to live near to our Lord now, he will not forsake us when we come to die. As we have lived, so we shall probably die, and after death, the judgment.

So we should think of our death sometimes, and realise that some day the Call will come to us. Then this little life will be finished, and we take into the other world the character we have formed here. Shall we have to say, " Yes, Lord, I did know that you left Heaven for me, that you led a poor and suffering life, that you bore the weight of all my sins in Gethsemane, and died a Death of Agony on Calvary for me. I did know all this, but it did not really mean much to me, I did not really care very much that you died for me. I knew too that you came to feed me with your very Self, your own most precious Body and Blood in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, but sometimes even that did not mean much to me. I did not care for the Gift you offered, even though I knew that that Gift was yourself. When I did come I did not take much trouble to prepare, to take my sins seriously, or realise what it meant to you to come to my cold heart. I knew you came to be present upon the Altar at every Mass, but I did not care to meet you very often ? " Shall we have to answer like that to our Lord when he asks us of our life and opportunities ? How can we ever hope to be saved if we have known his Will and done it not ?

Let us picture ourselves dying. Will it be easy to make our last Confession because we have gone to our Confessions so regularly ; our last Communion, because we have always prepared for our Communions so carefully, so that we can go into his Presence cleansed by his Precious Blood, strengthened by the Bread of Life, and in spite of all our sins and all our failures hear him say to us, as once to the woman who was a sinner, " Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much " (St. Luke vii. 47), or shall we have to hear the awful words, " I never knew you, depart from me " (St. Matt. vii. 23).

There is one more Sacrament of which we should think when we are thinking of illness and death, and that is the Sacrament of Holy Unction.

This Sacrament is mentioned by St. James. " Is any sick

among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church (the Greek word for elder is the same as that for Priest), and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord " (St. James v. 14).

The Church teaches that in serious illness this Sacrament should be used, that in all cases great spiritual refreshment is given, and that in some cases, if it be God's Will, bodily healing also results. All dying communicants should receive Holy Unction, and it is even administered when the patient is unconscious, and therefore unable to receive the other Sacraments.

If a Priest is summoned to give the last Sacraments, a table should be prepared with a white cloth, and if possible lights and a Crucifix. In Holy Unction eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands, and feet are each in turn anointed with the holy Oil, since these are the seat of the senses.

If sufficiently conscious, the priest first hears the Confession, then gives the Viaticum (or last Communion) and then administers Holy Unction.



CHAPTER VIII

THE CREED—*continued*

“ AND BURIED ”

OUR Lord's human body was at last taken down from the Cross, and his Blessed Mother received him into her arms. Well may we speak of her as the Mother of Sorrows, when we think of that sad moment, the climax of all her suffering. Our Lady and St. Mary Magdalene fulfilled the last sad offices for his Sacred Body ; Blessed Mary whose spotless purity was free from every touch of sin, and the other Mary who by great penitence and love was not unworthy to be her companion in that sacred duty. A message from our Lord to us all as to the heights to which penitence may attain.

St. Joseph of Arimathea gave his own new tomb and there they laid him. Think of the Peace which came at last after all the storm and stress, the peace of that garden and of the rock-hewn tomb where the weary Body of Jesus was laid.

We should keep Holy Saturday, Easter Eve, as a “ still ” day, watching in spirit by that quiet tomb, thinking of the death to sin of which the Collect speaks, the lifelong struggle with sin and the joyful end to that struggle : that so “ by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him ; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection, by his merits who died, and was buried, and rose again for us.”

“ HE DESCENDED INTO HELL ”

It should really be “ the place of Departed Spirits.” Our Lord went and preached the good tidings of his Resurrection to those who had lived before his coming on earth, according to God's law, to set free the spirits of just men made perfect.

The Church teaches that there is an Intermediate State in which the soul is purified. Even if we have done all we can to repent of our sins, and have confessed them with true penitence on our death-bed, there is still our faulty character to be purified. We cannot any of us think that we are fit to go straight from this earth to live in the All-holy, unveiled Presence of God. We could not bear it. We do indeed pass into the Presence of God at our death, for our particular judgment. After that our souls wait in the Intermediate State, and our bodies remain in the grave.

The Church teaches that it is a time of purification, when earthly stains are more and more purified and faulty characters grow in the nearer Presence of God. We cannot but feel, each of us, that we shall need our Purgatory (the word means cleansing), to fit us for the Presence of God. There can be no more temptation or sin in the Intermediate State, but there must be growth, and so we pray for those we love that they may grow in purity and have perfect light and peace. They pray for us, and we may help them by our prayers. So we pray for them and plead the Holy Sacrifice for them, and ask the prayers of the Church for the repose of their souls. A Mass for the Departed (and the offering of the Holy Mass is the best of all ways of praying for the dead) is called a Requiem, which means "Rest," and sometimes a Black Mass, because black vestments are used.

If we should have to choose the words to put on the Cross which marks the resting-place of those we love, there are no better words than the ancient prayers for the Departed, "Jesus, mercy." "Grant them, O Lord, eternal rest and let light perpetual shine upon them." Or simply, "R.I.P." "May they rest in peace."

"THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD"

On Easter Day our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. It is the greatest day in the whole of the Christian year; the day on which Christ overcame the power of sin, having made Atonement for us by his Death. So from that time Christians have kept the first day of the week holy, instead of the seventh. All

Sundays are Festivals, to commemorate the joy which came to us through the Resurrection, and that is why the forty days of Lent are counted, exclusive of the Sundays.

On Easter Day our Lord took again his human Body. We notice that before the Resurrection he was subject to the limitations of humanity; after the Resurrection it was different. He was no longer bound by ordinary human laws, for his Body was a risen and glorious Body, as ours will be after the general Resurrection.

At Easter all are bound to come to their Communion. The Prayer Book tells us that all must communicate at least "three times a year, of which Easter shall be one." And no one who has any love for our Lord could bear to stay away at this time of joy and triumph.

Any who are not well enough to go to Church for their Easter Communion, should make a point of asking to have the Holy Sacrament brought to them one day during the Easter Octave.

People often hesitate too much about asking to have Holy Communion brought to them during illness. It is quite an error to think this must only be done for the dying. Any who are ill for any length of time may and should ask for it, and the Priest will gladly bring it. All that is necessary to prepare the room is that there should be a small table, with a clean white cloth, and, if possible, a Crucifix and two candles on it. No room need be considered too humble, so long as it is neat and clean. In a long illness the Priest will always arrange to bring the Blessed Sacrament to the patient at regular intervals.

The Church teaches that we receive our Lord's Body and Blood when we receive only in one Kind, so that no difficulty need be felt about that, whenever it is necessary, as in sick Communions; although at other times it is most in accordance with our Lord's practice and that of the Primitive Church, that Communion should be in both kinds.

“HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN”

The forty days between our Lord's Resurrection and his Ascension are called the Great Forty Days, because it was the time when our Lord was on earth in his risen and glorified Body. On Ascension Day he ascended up into Heaven, taking his perfect human nature, so that we know that although he is our God, he is also Man, and can understand and sympathise with us. “We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (Heb. iv. 15).

Ascension Day is one of the great Festivals of the Church, a day when every one should attend Mass and if possible make his Communion. All children should be taught to go to Mass on that day. By the law of the land children may be kept from school to attend Church on Ascension Day, and all Christian parents should take advantage of this, and send a note to the schoolmaster explaining the reason of the child's absence. In Church schools this would not be necessary, as the children would attend from school.

It is very important to bring children up to be present at Mass on all Sundays and greater holy days. Even a little child of four or five can be taught that, when he hears the Sacring bell, Jesus comes to be present on the Altar, and can learn to join in the offering to God the Father of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ. A child, too, can very early learn a personal love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, which will never leave him. It may become dimmed as years go on, but it can never be wholly extinguished, and by God's grace may be revived.

“HE SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER”

“He ever liveth to make intercession” (Heb. vii. 25). Christ shews forth to God the Father his Sacrifice on the Cross, and with his Intercession in Heaven is joined the pleading of the Sacrifice

once offered on Calvary and now offered on every Altar throughout the Catholic Church.

“So he who once atonement wrought,
Our Priest of endless power,
Presents himself for those he bought
In that dark noon-tide hour.

His Manhood pleads where now it lives
On heaven’s eternal Throne,
And where in Mystic Rite he gives
His Presence to his own.”

“FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME TO JUDGE THE QUICK
AND THE DEAD ”

“The Quick ” means the living. At the last great day there will be some alive on earth and many millions dead : all will rise again, and body and soul will be reunited.

The thought of the Last Day brings us to the terrible question of everlasting punishment. All that we can say is that we know no one will be lost eternally who is not absolutely and wilfully impenitent, knowing the good, and deliberately and wilfully to the end choosing the evil. We can never say of others that they are lost, for we can judge no man, nor can we know what there may be of penitence, what God may be working in the soul during the last hours of seeming unconsciousness. One cry to God may save a soul, and there is probably truth in the lines,

“Between the stirrup and the ground
He mercy sought and mercy found.”

God is love and mercy and we may surely trust him. We shall be judged according to our opportunity ; our Lord himself teaches us that lesson. “That servant, which knew his Lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required ” (St. Luke xii. 47, 48).

We can trust to God's boundless mercy for others, for we cannot know what their opportunities have been or what their power of understanding and receptivity may be. Those who finally, up to the very end, refuse to repent, will be separated from God for ever. "Nothing is of faith as to the nature of the suffering of hell, but the witness of the Church is unchanging that this suffering is unending." No one who knows the Gospels can deny that our Lord teaches without any doubt a final separation between himself and obstinate sinners, and that the separated are associated with the devil and his angels.

For ourselves we can make no excuse. That which seems a small sin in the eyes of the world may be most grievous in God's sight in us, worse than many a sin which the world condemns, because committed by those who know God's will. *The sin of murder in some poor man, brought up from infancy in haunts of wickedness, may be less in God's sight than the sins of slander or backbiting in those who have had every privilege of surroundings and teaching all their lives.* Many a soul has been sent further down into the depths by the cruel tongues of "respectable" people, and there may be a dreadful awakening for many of us, as we see what our sins have been in God's sight, and see too the struggles after better things in the hearts of those we have perhaps despised.

Although our Lord's love was for all, he showed great sternness towards those who thought themselves righteous, but his tenderness and pity were for poor sinners who turned to him in penitence. We should do well to consider for ourselves what he meant when he said, "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you" (St. Matt. xxi. 31).

There is another thought which comes to us concerning this clause of the Creed: that is the thought of our responsibility concerning the souls of others. No one is a true Catholic who has not the missionary spirit. If we really believe that we can come nearer to Jesus through the Sacraments than in any other way, and that the Catholic Faith has the power to give that

"joy which no man taketh from you" (St. John xvi. 22), then surely we must long and strive to bring others to that Faith. Selfishness in religion must be avoided. Our Lord thirsted for souls on the Cross, and if we are true followers of him we shall share that thirst and do our utmost to bring others to him.

Think what it will be, at that last Day, to know that we have had our share in the saving of souls ! It would be worth living, and dying, if we could help one soul to come closer to our Lord. It cannot be right to keep our good things to ourselves, or to be too shy about letting others know we care for our Religion. Steadfastness and consistency will gain great influence, in time. Nothing brings people to the love of the Sacraments so much as being with one who loves them.

In their homes, in workshops, factories or in professional life, wherever their work calls them, Catholics are always missionaries too, longing to bring others to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

For some there is the further definite Vocation to Mission work. The work of a Mission Nurse, perhaps, in the slums of our great cities, or work in the Foreign Missions of the Church. Thousands and thousands of souls know nothing of the love of God for lack of teachers. Yet our Lord still says, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel" (St. Mark xvi. 15). All who are free to take up work according to their own choice should at least consider the possibility of such a Vocation.

We are sometimes told that the religions of the heathen are as good for them as ours. It only needs a very slight study of the question to discover the iniquity of such a statement, and to realise the cruelty and degradation of even the most civilised of the heathen races.

There is one more thought, which we dare not pass over. Whatever it may mean exactly, if we believe in Heaven, the Bible and our Creeds alike teach us to believe in hell.

We may have boundless hope and trust in God's mercy for others. But what for ourselves ? What if we, with full knowledge of our Faith, having learnt and known that the Holy Communion is "generally necessary to salvation," that is neces-

very in general to all who have the opportunity ; having been taught too that our Lord has left " power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him," and that Confession is a necessary part of repentance ; what if we, knowing all this, grow lax, cease to pray, cease to come to the Sacraments, allow ourselves to sin habitually and wilfully. Can we, knowing his will and doing it not, hope to be saved ? Hell means at least eternal remorse, the soul shut off from the light of the Presence of God for ever ; not as the arbitrary sentence of a cruel judge, but because God would not be God if he were not perfectly just, and the wages of wilful unrepented sin, is death.



CHAPTER IX

THE CREED—*continued*

“ I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST ”

THE Holy Ghost is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, equal in majesty and glory to the Father and the Son. It is he who is the Life and Inspiration of the Church. On the first Whitsun Day, God the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles in tongues of fire, and from that day the Church was formed. The Church is indwelt by God the Holy Ghost, and therefore holy.

Whitsun Day is the birthday of the Catholic Church, when the Holy Ghost came to dwell in her. We receive him first in Baptism, and then in a further gift in Confirmation, when he gives us the strength we need for the battle of life. The Holy Ghost is often spoken of as the “ Comforter,” and to “ comfort ” really means “ to make strong.”

It is God the Holy Ghost who gives us all good desires, it is he who helps us to know God and enlightens our conscience. That is why we should always pray to God the Holy Ghost for guidance in any difficult matter, and for help to make our self-examinations well, and before Meditation, that he may teach us the things of God.

“ Most tender Spirit ! Mighty God !
Sweet must thy Presence be
If loss of Jesus can be gain
So long as we have thee.”

It is God the Holy Ghost who teaches us to pray and meditate, and helps us to progress. Realising this, it may be found helpful to take here some thoughts on Prayer.

There are two kinds of Prayer.

VOCAL PRAYER. This includes all said prayers, whether public or private, including ejaculatory prayers—those little short sentences by which we may lift up the heart to God at all times.

A necessary part of Vocal Prayer is daily Morning and Evening Prayer, which should always include

1. The Invocation, Our Father and Hail Mary.
2. Thanksgiving.
3. Prayer for guidance, in the Morning Prayer, and for help against any special besetting sin.
4. Contrition.

At evening, self-examination, a detailed confession of sin (noting down special sins for the next Confession) and prayer for pardon.

5. Intercession for relations and friends and others.
6. The Grace of our Lord.

Morning and Evening Prayer can be said from a Manual, if that is found more helpful, only in that case great care must be taken not to become formal. It is best to change the form of our daily prayers from time to time.

Intercessions should not be confined to the needs of our immediate friends and relations. We should make a practice of giving a definite time to Intercessions, for the Church, Home and Foreign Missions, our country. Everyone can give at least ten minutes once or twice a week to Intercessory Prayer.

We should pray to God the Holy Ghost especially at such a time as Whitsuntide, using a litany to the Holy Spirit, and often praying to him for guidance and help.

MENTAL PRAYER is a higher kind of Prayer, because it is listening to God's voice as well as speaking to him ourselves. Mental Prayer is divided again into simple Meditation and Contemplation, and some simple form of Meditation should be practised by all. It is not enough to ask God for what we think we need and come to him for forgiveness of our sins ; we must listen to what he has to say to us.

Everyone should make a practice of making a Meditation for at least ten minutes daily. It is far more helpful to consider some passage in the Bible prayerfully and carefully, trying to hear what God is saying to us through his Holy Word, than merely to read a chapter through without thinking perhaps very much about it.

The way to practise this devotion is first to kneel down, make the sign of the Cross reverently, try and realise God's Presence, and put away all distracting thoughts. Then say a short prayer to God the Holy Ghost, perhaps part of the hymn "Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire," or the Collect for Whitsun Day, then take a verse or some verses of the Bible. One need not take every verse of a chapter, though it is usually best to go through a book in the New Testament; one can take a few verses, and then next day others further on, about which it seems possible to make a meditation.

It is best to begin with one of the Gospels, and try and see the scene of the Gospel story. Remember because our Lord is God as well as Man, he is speaking to us, and we can intersperse our Meditation with little acts of love and self-surrender. "Jesu, I love thee." "O my God, I desire to give myself to thee." Be still, and listen to what God will teach. Then make a resolution; not a different one each day, but fitting it in, as it were, with the Meditation. Then briefly offer it all to God, and as far as possible let the thought from the Meditation be with you throughout the day.

There is no practice of devotion by which we shall learn so well to know our Lord, his Mind, his Character, his Will for us, and so be drawn to imitate him, as by Meditation.

For instance, take the thought of that evening when Jesus sat by the door, and they brought the sick to him to be healed. Pause for a moment to realise God's Presence, ask the help of the Holy Ghost, then picture the scene: see him as he sits there at the end of the long, hot, Eastern day, and the sick, and those who brought them, crowding round and pressing on him. He must have been hot and weary, but he never repulsed them. See them come one after another, drawing near for his healing touch.

Then think what it means to our soul ; what have we to bring him for healing ? Have we perhaps some old wound or scar of sin, hidden away from all, unhealed ? Yet his eye can see it, and he longs that we should bring it to him for his absolving touch. He will speak to us and draw us to him, if we will listen. We pray, " Lord, help me to see the wounds and the sickness of my soul," and make our resolution as to a deeper penitence, a true confession perhaps of some sin long hidden, and a more earnest self-examination and careful noting down of the daily sins ; so that when the time of our Confession comes it will be honest and real ; no sins forgotten because we have not troubled to remember.

In meditating on any scene in the Bible, we may hear God's voice if we will. At times it is more helpful to take the attributes of our Lord, and to meditate on his love, his gentleness, forbearance, sympathy, courage. It is only by coming more and more to know him that we can hope to become Christlike.

In the higher form of Meditation, called Contemplation, the soul holds almost unbroken Communion with God in prayer, necessary external occupation not breaking the conscious union. The gift of Contemplation is a great gift of God : some very humble Christians attain to it, and some Religious are called to give their whole lives to Contemplation and Intercession. It is a very high and special Vocation. Who can say what souls are saved through the prayers of those who give themselves wholly to a life of prayer and penance ? They rise each night to pray for those who so sorely need their prayer. As one thinks of the sin of some great wicked city at night, it is comforting to feel that there are those who " by night stand in the courts of the Lord," and we may join our prayer to theirs, since from their close union with God flows out strength and help for the souls of others.

" THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH "

There are four notes by which the Catholic Church is known. It is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. The Church is One, because the members of the Catholic Church all have the same

faith and the same sacramental system. It is Holy, because it was founded by God the Holy Ghost, and is indwelt by him. It is Catholic or Universal because it is the Church of the whole world and teaches the whole truth. It is Apostolic, because it has a priesthood validly ordained by means of Episcopal succession from the Apostles.

In the Catholic Church there are the valid Sacraments, because it was only to the Church that the power of administering them was given. The Holy Ghost does of course work outside the Church ; many good and holy lives are lived by those who are not Catholics ; but they miss much of the joys and privileges which come through the Sacraments. Then, too, our Lord prayed that his Church might be One, therefore it cannot be anything but a sin knowingly to break off from Christian unity. (It is a different thing when it is done in ignorance.) That is why it is wrong for English Church people to attend services of other religions, even occasionally. It encourages the sins of "heresy and schism" from which we pray in the Litany to be delivered. Heresy means choosing for ourselves, instead of being guided by the Church, and schism means "cutting off"—cutting ourselves off from the Church and so rending the seamless robe of Christ. The Church is Militant on earth, Expectant in Purgatory, and Triumphant in Heaven.

There are three great branches of the Catholic Church.

1. The Orthodox Communion.
2. The Roman Communion.
3. The Anglican Communion.

All these are really and essentially one. They all have the Apostolic Succession in their Bishops, and a validly ordained Priesthood, and therefore true Sacraments. They all profess the same Creed, and their Liturgy, although differing in form, is one and the same.

A difficulty with the Roman Catholics is that they do not acknowledge our Orders. They say that when, at the Reformation, England renounced the Papal Claims, she cut herself off

from the true Church. Really she did nothing of the kind ; the Reformers were most careful to keep the Apostolic Succession. But the Papal Claims had been growing more and more, and the position of the Pope had been gradually built up to what it is now, that is, in fact an absolute autocracy.

The Pope rightly claims the position of being Bishop of the Chief See in Christendom, and the successor of St. Peter. But in the first days of the Church we find that, though St. Peter was the chief of the Apostles, even he was not considered either an autocrat or infallible. St. Paul says, " When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed " (Gal. ii. 11).

If we are asked whether we are Catholics or Protestants, we must always say we are Catholics. Every time we repeat the Creed we assert our belief in the Holy Catholic Church, but the word Protestant is not to be found in the Prayer Book. The Protestants were those who broke off from the Church and her Sacraments, first in Germany, and their teaching spread from Germany to England. All Dissenters are Protestants, and their teaching is partly followed by what we call the " Protestant Party " within the Church. But the Church of England herself is undoubtedly Catholic. All branches of the Catholic Church retain the threefold ministry :

1. The Bishops, the successors of the Apostles.
2. Priests, or as they are called in the New Testament, Elders (the word is the same in the Greek).
3. Deacons.

Those called to the Priesthood are first ordained to the Diaconate. Deacons cannot celebrate Mass but they assist the Priest or Bishop in his own office at the solemn offering of the Holy Sacrifice ; they cannot give Absolution, nor the Blessing. They may Baptise, as may also the laity if necessary. They may read Mattins and Evensong, and may preach with the Bishop's permission. A deacon wears his stole over one shoulder only, to show that he has not fully taken on himself the yoke of the Lord.

Priests at their Ordination receive the power to administer the Sacraments (*see* Ordination of Priests), to celebrate Mass, to preach, to bless, and to absolve penitents.

Bishops are the heads of the Church. They alone can give the Sacraments of Confirmation, and Holy Orders, and consecrate Churches and the Chrisom.



CHAPTER X

THE CREED—*continued*

“THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS”

THIS is one of the most beautiful and helpful clauses of the Creed. It teaches us how little is the real separation between the Church militant and the Church at rest. Those who sleep in Christ are not dead, they are living, and they worship God and pray to him. We also worship him and pray to him, so that through him we are closely united to each other.

Especially at the Holy Mass, we can realise this Communion of Saints. The faithful departed are very near to him ; at Mass and especially at our Communion, we are very near him too. And not only those few who have been specially dear to us, but, in the Communion of Saints, we are made one with the great fellowship of all the Saints and Angels before the Throne.

When Jesus comes to be present on our Altars, the adoring Angels are there, as we sing with Angels and Archangels the “Holy, Holy, Holy,” the Holy Mother of God must be near her Son, and the blessed Saints join with us in adoration, as we pray that we may, with them, attain to the open Vision. When once the Communion of Saints is realised, the false teaching of Spiritism can take no hold.

“THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS”

We believe in the forgiveness of sins, because “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans v. 8). It is the whole Mystery of the Atonement. The first man, Adam, fell, and since the Fall all men are born in sin. Man was all-sinful, God all-holy, and since the “wages of sin is death” (Romans vi. 23), and God is perfect justice, man must die. There was no bridge which could span the gulf between sinful man and the all-holy

God, until, in the fulness of time, the Son of God came down from Heaven to become Incarnate (made flesh). He who was very God took our human nature, and being made Man, and yet without sin, made possible the union between God and Man.

In his human nature he bore the utmost penalty of our sin, and made atonement (at-one-ment) for us on the Cross.

So because he died to save us from eternal death, we may believe in the forgiveness of sins. All that is needed on our part is true repentance; the repentance which does not shrink from pain and shame. We must be sure that we have done our utmost to show sorrow for the sins which cost him his Death and bitter Passion, and have remembered that forgiveness is only promised after Confession, not of a vague sinfulness, but of sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 St. John i. 9).

There are seven "Deadly sins" as they are called; that is sins from which all others spring, and which, if not resisted, destroy the life of the soul.

Every one has some special "besetting sin" against which he must make special effort, and which he must make a subject for special self-examination. It will always be found to have its root in one of the Deadly sins. It is often helpful to strive to attain the opposite virtue to our besetting sin; for instance, to cultivate punctuality and diligence in work, if we are naturally slothful, etc., instead of merely striving to overcome sloth.

It is an ancient custom, and one much to be followed, to use the Penitential Psalms as prayer against the Deadly sins, or as penance when we have fallen into them.

The Deadly sins are,

<i>Sin.</i>	<i>Opposite Virtue.</i>	<i>Penitential Psalm.</i>
1. Anger	Patience, Meekness	VI
2. Pride	Humility	XXXII
3. Gluttony	Temperance	XXXVIII
4. Lust	Chastity	LI
5. Avarice	Liberality	CII
6. Envy	Brotherly love, gentleness	CXXX
7. Sloth	Diligence	CXLIII

"THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY"

We believe that not our souls only, but our bodies will rise again ; these same bodies, only purified from earthly stain and with no further possibility of pain and suffering.

So we must bear in mind that our bodies as well as our souls have to be prepared for Eternity. A right care of the body is the duty of every Christian. Scrupulous cleanliness and neatness, and a right attention to dress, are by no means unimportant. We receive the Sacraments through our bodies, and a sense of reverence should make us scrupulously clean.

Not only that, but our belief in this clause of the Creed should teach us the greatest modesty and purity in thought, word, and deed. The freedom of modern girls need not in any way spoil their womanhood. A woman or a girl, in any of the modern occupations for women, can, if she will, follow the example of the pure and holy Mother of God, just as much as if she were living the most sheltered life. Many a girl has done great things for God in latter years, at home and abroad, in all ranks of life and in every sort of occupation, doing public service and often a man's work, keeping true to the Sacraments, maintaining her self-respect and modesty, and making herself respected. There are thousands of women of whom England may well be proud. Alas, there are many also who bring shame on their womanhood.

If this clause of the Creed were said less thoughtlessly, men and women would strive more earnestly to do battle with the sins of the flesh, hard though the battle may be. There is an old soldier's epitaph, which may give us a helpful thought on this subject.

"Here lies an old soldier at rest in the Lord,
He fought many battles at home and abroad,
But the hottest engagement he ever was in
Was the battle with self in his fight against sin."

It is a hard fight, often a desperate fight, but for men and women alike victory over their passions is possible, and must be fought for and won.

One more thought about the body. It may fall to some of us, at some time during our lives, to have to prepare the bodies of the dead for their last resting-place. This should always be done with prayer, and in silence, with the greatest care and reverence, since the body was made the Temple of the Holy Ghost in Baptism.

“AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING”

We make the sign of the Cross as we say these last words of our profession of Faith, for we believe that one day “the sign of the Cross will appear in the Heavens,” then shall come the great Judgment, and after that we humbly pray that we may enter into the Life Everlasting.

Think what it means, an endless life of perfect joy in the Presence of God, in the blessed company of all the Saints, unbroken communion then with those we have loved with a pure love on earth—for since love is eternal it cannot die, and there can be no unsatisfied desires in that new life. Think what it will be to know our dear Lord and see him face to face. We have striven to know him on earth, we have often come very near to him in our Communion, but there, we shall have his unveiled Presence.

We know ourselves faulty and sinful here; there we shall no longer be tempted to sin. All the joys which we can picture, more, far more, than we can ever imagine, will be ours, for ever and ever; and, best joy of all; if in spite of all our sins and failures we have struggled on and never given up trying, our Lord will welcome us with his loving, gracious words, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (St. Matt. xxv. 21).

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem!

God grant I once may see
Thy endless joys, and of the same
Partaker aye may be!

Ah! my sweet home, Jerusalem,
Would God I were in thee!
Would God my woes were at an end
Thy joys that I may see!”

Eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard,
Nor heart of man can tell,
The store of joys God hath prepared
For them that love him well."

We believe Heaven to be a state of unending, perfect happiness, where there can be no more sin or sorrow, where every desire, every aspiration, is satisfied, where, with those we love, we shall rejoice in the Beatific Vision of God.

" I LEARN TO BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER, WHO MADE ME," ETC.

We were made for God, and we know that none of his work can be purposeless. For each one of us there is a Vocation, a Call of God. The seed of our Vocation was planted in Baptism, and, if we listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit, we come to know what that Vocation is. Any and every work to which we are called may be our Vocation, the work in which we can serve God. And to some He gives the special and sacred Vocation to the Religious Life, or to the Priesthood. What matters is that we should be ready to hear his Voice, and obey it, realising that we are called to follow the Will of our Heavenly Father, and not our own.

" IN GOD THE SON, WHO HATH REDEEMED ME," ETC.

By his Death on the Cross, he gave hope and joy to all believers, for he conquered Death and paid the utmost penalty of sin. Sin has no real power now, for we can always conquer it if we will, since Christ has redeemed us.

" IN GOD THE HOLY GHOST, WHO SANCTIFIETH ME," ETC.

God the Father made, God the Son redeemed, but God the Holy Ghost sanctifieth us, here and now. The Bishop prays for each candidate at Confirmation, "Daily increase in him thy manifold gifts of grace." We are always growing in holiness, if we correspond with God's grace.

We are called to be saints, each of us. We must look straight to Jesus and strive to be like him, to be Christlike, we may take no lower ideal. It would not be enough to imitate even the greatest Saint. But we can strive after this highest ideal, by the help of the Holy Ghost. We shall become more like Christ as we meditate on him, and, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, learn more of his gentleness, his love, his tenderness, long-suffering, patience, and so become "sanctified."

There is some danger lest we should leave God the Holy Ghost out of our lives ; yet all good thoughts, and desires, and strength to resist temptation, and enlightenment in times of difficulty, come to us through the great Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.



CHAPTER XI

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

THE Ten Commandments were given to the Jews, and the Jews, as a rule, interpreted them only in their literal sense. Our Lord taught us that Christians must go much further, and keep the Commandments in the spirit, as well as in the letter.

The first four Commandments deal with our duty to God, and the last six with our duty to our neighbour. It is a strange fact that many people, without realising it, decide for themselves which of God's Commandments are of importance, and which need not be kept ! Thus they would think stealing, or murder, very grave sins, but would consider it no sin at all to neglect the worship of God. Many who say they have never done anything really wrong, have habitually broken the first four Commandments, because real worship has had no part in their lives.

1ST COMMANDMENT

This teaches that we must put God first, and never neglect his Holy Religion. We are not likely, in a nominally Christian country, to worship false gods, but we do make "idols" nevertheless. An idol is anything for which we care more than we do for God. Often people make money their idol, or social position, or some person whose good opinion means more to them than anything else. True deep love for others may be a great help in our lives, only we must take care that it is not passionate, undisciplined love, which absorbs too much, or a love which makes us give up what we know to be right, because the person we care for would not approve. To do that is being ashamed to confess Christ.

2ND COMMANDMENT

This Commandment does not forbid our having Crucifixes, or statues, or pictures of the Saints ; that is no more wrong than having pictures of those we love, since we know that the statues and pictures are merely to remind us of those they represent.

This Commandment teaches us concerning worship, which is the duty we all owe to God. Sometimes people say that they go to a "place of worship," when they mean that they go only to hear a sermon. Real worship means raising our hearts to him, giving him thanks and adoring him, especially when we come to kneel before him to plead the Holy Sacrifice at Mass. Worship is the giving of self, not gaining for self, and it is that which we owe to God. It is wholly wrong when people give up going to Church, because they do not like the Priest, or do not find the sermons helpful. It is our joy, and privilege, no less than our duty, to "Come before his presence with thanksgiving," and worship him with unselfish devotion.

3RD COMMANDMENT

This Commandment teaches reverence about the things of God. It forbids all swearing and bad language, and we should be careful to avoid expressions in which the Name of God, or of our Lord, are used. To use such expressions is certainly to be wanting in the spirit of Holy Fear.

It includes any sort of irreverence about holy things, jokes from the Bible, and flippant talk, also irreverence in Church, whispering and looking about, and especially any want of reverence in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

4TH COMMANDMENT

This Commandment teaches us that we are to work for God on six days, and that one day is to be given specially to worship him. All time belongs to God ; our religion must be lived out in our daily life and work, as much as in our worship. Although the

Jewish Sabbath became the Christian Sunday, we are none the less bound to keep that day holy which has been specially set apart for God. Sunday is our weekly commemoration of the Resurrection. It should be a happy and holy day, and, as far as may be, a day of rest and refreshment. The strict Jewish Law as to Sabbath observance does not apply to Christians, but all are bound to worship God on his own day.

We read how the Apostles assembled on the first day of the week "to break Bread" (Acts xx. 7), and learn from them how to honour Sunday, by attending the Lord's own Service on the Lord's own day. No other service was instituted by our Lord himself. Others are beautiful, and helpful, but only supplementary to this. It is an obligation throughout the whole Catholic Church to hear Mass on Sunday, unless unavoidably prevented.

5TH COMMANDMENT

This teaches the respect, and honour, due to all in authority, not to parents only, but to all whom God has set over us, including our spiritual fathers, the clergy, who should always be treated with respect on account of their sacred office.

6TH COMMANDMENT

This Commandment forbids us to keep in our hearts any anger, or hatred, against others, any bitter feelings or wish to harm them. We cannot come to our Communion if we have any such feelings in our heart, and must remember our Lord's solemn warning against coming to the Altar unreconciled to our brother. It is one of the dispositions necessary for a good Communion, that we should be "in love and charity with our neighbour."

People are sometimes confused about the meaning of being "in charity." It does not mean that we are bound to like everyone; we may be quite unable to like them, or to approve of them. But, if we would not willingly do them harm, if we would help them if possible, and if we can pray for them, then we are not out

of charity, and may come to our Communion with a quiet mind. It is helpful to remember these three points. At the same time, we cannot too often bear in mind, that we pray to be forgiven, only as we ourselves forgive others.

7TH COMMANDMENT

This includes all sins of impurity in thought, word, and deed, and the only way to combat temptations against this Commandment is resolutely to avoid all occasions of sin, whether people, places, books, or amusements, and to turn the thoughts away from them. It may be that the breaking off from some person, who is to us an occasion of sin, will involve great suffering; yet we must remember our Lord's stern words, "If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee" (St. Matt. xviii. 9)—there is obvious suffering involved, yet it is the only way of salvation for both.

8TH COMMANDMENT

This teaches honesty and fairness in all dealings, the avoidance of such things as running into debt, spending money one has not got, not returning things borrowed, not being quite straightforward in business dealings, e.g. either with employers or customers.

9TH COMMANDMENT

To "bear false witness," is the same as the "slandering" spoken of in the duty towards our neighbour. Evil speaking is saying unkind things about anyone; slandering or bearing false witness is saying unkind things which are not true, or which we are not sure are true, or which are exaggerated. These sins of unkind and untrue speech about others, are often the worst sins of religious people. Want of charity brings down our Lord's most severe condemnation. "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (St. John viii. 7).

The unkind tongues of "respectable" people have gone far to murder souls, to send them down into the depths, from which a little love, and sympathy, might have rescued them—a worse sin than the murder of the body. Kind words, and deeds and thoughts, seem a comparatively small part of our religion, yet "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 3).

"Judging of others, we can see too well,
Their grievous fall, but not how grieved, they fell.
Judging ourselves, we to ourselves recall,
Not how we fell, but how we grieved to fall."

10TH COMMANDMENT

This forbids any discontent or murmuring against God's dealings with us. It does not forbid an honest effort to make the most of the opportunities he gives. The Duty towards our Neighbour, which is the positive side of the Ten Commandments, teaches us to do our duty in that state of life unto which it *shall* please God to call us; not, as it is sometimes misquoted, "to which it *has* pleased God to call us," as if it forbade all legitimate advance.

OUR DUTY TOWARDS GOD

A duty is that which we owe. Our duty towards God is first to believe in him. That is to have a right faith, which is part of our Baptismal Vow. To fear him, that is to reverence him, it does not mean to be afraid of him: Holy Fear is one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost: "and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength." All this we owe, and what we owe we are bound to pay.

Sometimes, it seems impossible to love God as we ought. It makes it less difficult if we remember that our Lord has said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me" (St. John xiv. 21).

If we only have the love of God in our hearts, everything else will go right, the whole of the rest of our religion, and our right dealings with others, will follow. There is an old saying, "*dilige et quod vis fac*," "Love, and do what you like," which means that if we love God, it will follow naturally that we shall do the right thing, because we shall want to please him. All the rest of our duty to God will follow from love; worship and thanksgiving will be its natural outcome, and love is not an emotional feeling, but the will to please God.

"TO WORSHIP HIM"

The duty of worship brings its own reward. Only those who practise it can know the joy of coming daily, if it may be, into Jesus' Presence, whether we are able to attend a daily Mass before our day's work, or to find a few minutes during the day to kneel before some quiet Altar, where the one lamp tells of God's Presence. We learn to come to him as our friend, One who is very close to us, and who soothes and cheers and refreshes us. God is never our debtor; He gives abundantly to those who give to him.

"TO GIVE HIM THANKS"

Thanksgiving, too, is part of our duty to God, and we must learn to thank him for all he gives us, all our joys and pleasures, so long as they are not sinful: for the Cross he sends us too, since only by the Cross can we be made like unto him. The habit of habitual thanksgiving is the best possible cure for depression and self-pity, which more than almost any other spiritual sins spoil our lives, and which so often are not even recognised as sin.

"TO PUT MY WHOLE TRUST IN HIM"

The duty of trust in God is often hard, when all seems to go wrong, yet if we remember that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son" (St. John iii. 16), we cannot

doubt his love, and must trust, when we cannot understand, even as a child trusts its father.

“ TO CALL UPON HIM ”

This is the duty of regular, earnest prayer.

“ TO HONOUR HIS HOLY NAME AND HIS WORD ”

We honour God's Name by our reverence, and also by the lives we live. We bring dishonour to his Name, when we are untrue to what we profess. We dishonour his Name too by moods and depression. The life of a Christian should be full of joy, living close to Jesus in the Sacraments. It is a real dishonour to him, to give way to gloom and despondency, and does untold harm, not only to our own souls, but to the cause of Christ.

His written word is the Holy Bible, which we should treat with respect and study with diligence. It is an old and pious custom to refrain from putting anything else on a Bible.

“ TO SERVE HIM TRULY ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE ”

There is Vocation again, since what we do matters little, so long as we set ourselves to serve God, and are not disobedient to his call, but ready to listen to the Voice of the Holy Spirit.

OUR DUTY TO OUR NEIGHBOUR

“ My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do unto all men, as I would they should do unto me ”—the “ Golden Rule ” as it is called, which, if only it were followed, would make this world so infinitely happier. This high ideal is indeed our duty, what we owe. The details will be found to be simply the positive side of the Ten Commandments.

We must never forget our Lord's words, “ By this shall all

men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another ” (St. John xiii. 35). We may be regular at the Sacraments and in all practices of our Religion, and upright and blameless in our lives—but if we fail in love to our neighbour, it is all worthless in GOD’S sight and brings shame and dishonour on the Religion we profess.



CHAPTER XII

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE Lord's Prayer is the model prayer, which teaches us what prayer ought to be. And this prayer does not begin with anything about ourselves, but leads us to look first up to Heaven. Then it goes on to shew us our right attitude towards God, our Father, some one to whom we can go with love and confidence. He is the Father of us all, and cares about everything that concerns us. We acknowledge all this when we look up to him and say, "Our Father which art in Heaven."

See how unselfish this model prayer is : none of the first clauses are about our own needs, but are all concerned with God's honour.

"HALLOWED BE THY NAME"

May thy Name be revered and adored. We must see that we are doing all we can to bring about the hallowing of his Name, not being ashamed to express our reverence outwardly, always kneeling at the right times, bowing our head at the Holy Name, making others feel that even to hear any irreverent, or flippant, or wrong talk, is real pain to us.

"THY KINGDOM COME"

We are apt to pray this petition unthinkingly, when we do not really desire it in our hearts, for we are not ready for his coming. If we are afraid of his coming, we must know that all is not well with us, for when he comes nothing will ever be wrong any more. The thought of the Last Judgment is a thought to fill us with awe ; with fear too, if we are not fulfilling his Commands. How

can we hope to inhabit the Kingdom of Heaven, if we do not obey God's plain Commands? People receive the truth, and come to the Sacraments, and then grow lax and give it all up, not seeming to consider that they are imperilling their eternal salvation. We may make every excuse and have every hope for those who have not known, but can we hope for ourselves if, having known these things, we give them up, and die perhaps in mortal sin, unabsolved, and without that most Holy Sacrament which, our Catechism tells us, is "necessary to salvation."

It is not enough to pray "Thy kingdom come," we must do our part in bringing it about. Everyone who has a missionary spirit, and is true to his colours, can help. It is possible to live true to Catholic Faith and practice out in the world, and it is only those who are doing so who can really convince others that it is possible, and help them to live it too. It is a sin to take work where it is impossible to get to the Sacraments: and no one need be dishonest or tell lies in business, in the end it is those who are true who are most trusted by their employers. If only Christians will be faithful and shew others that they care and that the Catholic Religion is full of joy and happiness, they will have countless opportunities of helping on God's Kingdom.

"THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN"

In our third Baptismal Vow, we promised to obey God's Commandments, and in this petition we pray, for ourselves and for others, that we may be faithful to this Vow, and may help and not hinder obedience to God's will. It is a very perfect obedience we pray for—that of the holy Angels in Heaven, who do the will of God continually.

It is impossible to think too often of the solemnity of the Vows by which we are bound; we have no choice, but are Vowed to do God's will; happiness will only come if we are faithful. It is impossible to avoid influencing others; we cannot escape from the fact that each one has a tremendous, if unconscious, power, by which to help or hinder the fulfilment of God's will.

“GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD”

All the petitions hitherto considered are principally concerned with God's honour ; now we come to our own needs : remembering as we do so that this great prayer is the model for all prayers. If we follow our Lord's teaching, we must be more concerned with the honour of God, and the furtherance of God's Kingdom, than with our own desires.

God will give us all we need, but he makes it conditional on our asking him, as an earthly father cares that his child should come to him, without fear, for all it desires. This petition is for all our bodily needs, and also for our spiritual needs, the Supernatural Food whereby our souls are fed. There is nothing too great or too small to bring to God in prayer.

“AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT
TRESPASS AGAINST US”

“Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish” (St. Luke xiii. 5). All sin will be forgiven, only there must first be repentance. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins” : but the converse is equally true. If we do not repent and confess our sins, we cannot hope to be forgiven.

Neither is there any forgiveness to those who are themselves unforgiving. It is an awful thing to pray this prayer, if we have any unforgiveness in our heart. We must be ready to forgive, to pray for those who have done us harm, to do kind actions towards them if we can. Often if we can force ourselves to say, or do, something kind, the right spirit follows.

“LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US
FROM EVIL”

We dare not pray this, if we are in any way deliberately going into temptation. We all know what things, or places, or people, are sources of temptation to us, and we are insincere and unreal if we pray this prayer, and deliberately expose ourselves to

temptations. We cannot then expect God's help. "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off. . . . If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out" (St. Mark ix. 43, 47). If we do our part, then God will most surely deliver us from evil. Temptations may, and will come, but he will give us power to withstand. People are often discouraged, because special effort only seems to bring with it renewed temptation. We must expect this: the devil is quite willing to leave us alone, if we are making no effort, so that any effort on our part brings renewed temptation on his. That is why we are so often tempted just after Communion or Confession; but the power of God is stronger than the power of evil, and we can conquer if we will. We have to learn even to rejoice in temptation, looking on it as a mark of God's trust. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation" (St. James i. 12).

THE DESIRE

"I desire my Lord God our Heavenly Father,
Who is the Giver of all goodness,
To send his grace unto me and to all people;
That we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we
ought to do.
And I pray unto God,
That he will send us all things that be needful both for our
souls and bodies;
And that he will be merciful unto us and forgive us our sins;
And that it will please him to save and defend us in all
dangers ghostly and bodily;
And that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness,
And from our ghostly enemy,
And from everlasting death.
And this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness,
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Here we have in a few words what ought to be the whole object of our lives, and the means whereby that object may be obtained. We are put into this world to worship and serve our Heavenly Father, not to please self, and he gives to his faithful children

many and many a joy here on earth, and in the world to come everlasting bliss.

We pray that he will give us his grace, and he gives it abundantly for all our needs in the Sacraments of his love. Again and again we sin, and fall away, but we can never wear out the love and patience of the Sacred Heart. If we come to him in penitence, he will never cast us out, and the sin of despair is the only sin which makes forgiveness impossible, since it doubts the mercy and love of God. It is worth while to persevere. "He that endureth to the end shall be saved" (St. Matt. x. 22); we have God's promise for that, and may think of it sometimes when the battle is fierce, and we are tempted to give up.

We must not persevere in our endeavours only in order to win Heaven, or escape Hell (yet we must not forget them, since Heaven and Hell are eternally true), but God's great love deserves a better return than any motive of self-interest, since he died for his children.

"My God, I love thee, not because
I hope for heaven thereby,
Nor yet because who love thee not
Are lost eternally.

Not for the hope of gaining aught,
Not seeking a reward,
But as thyself hast loved me,
O ever-loving Lord.

So would I love thee, dearest Lord,
And in thy praise will sing,
Solely because thou art my God
And my most loving King."

There is our ambition, that which makes it worth while to be true to our Lord, all through our lives.

CHAPTER XIII

“THE HOLY COMMUNION, COMMONLY CALLED THE MASS”

THE above is the title in the first Prayer Book after the Reformation. It is not enough to understand the Doctrine of the Mass, all communicants should also understand the ritual and ceremonial which express that doctrine.

Before Mass begins, the Sacristan makes certain preparations. The upper cover is taken off the altar, leaving only a “fair linen” cloth, that is a white cloth on which are usually embroidered five crosses, in memory of our Lord’s five wounds. These correspond to the five crosses which are carved on the Altar itself.

The Sacristan, or server, then lights the two candles which typify Christ as the light of the world, and brings in the cruets. The cruets are glass vessels, one containing the wine, the other water, for the mingled Chalice, which typifies the union of the human and divine Nature. With these he brings in the Paten or a Ciborium, and the Lavabo dish and jug, which are used by the priest for a ceremonial cleansing of the hands before the Consecration, the server bringing them to him for that purpose. The Paten is a small plate on which is placed the bread ready for consecration. All these are ranged on the Credence, a slab or table at the side of the Sanctuary. Sometimes the wafers are placed in a Ciborium, a vessel like a covered Chalice, and this is usually put on the Altar, not on the Credence.

Unleavened bread should always be used when possible, as with wafers there is no risk of irreverence as there is with ordinary bread, when it is quite possible that some crumb may fall. The

unleavened bread of which wafers are made is purer than bread made with leaven.

Where there is no server, these preparations are made by the Sacristan.

The Chalice is not brought in before Mass. It is placed in the Sacristy and covered, first with a Purificator, which the Priest afterwards uses for the cleansing of the sacred vessels, then with the Priest's Paten, on which is placed the host for the Priest's Communion, then, as a protection, with a Pall or square piece of fine linen stiffened with cardboard or starch, and finally with a silk chalice veil and a Burse, or silk case, containing the Corporal. The Corporal is a rather large square piece of fine linen, sometimes embroidered, which the Priest unfolds after he has carried in the Chalice and Paten, and places on the Altar before Mass. The Chalice stands on this and must always be handled with the greatest care.

The Priest who is about to offer the Holy Sacrifice first puts on his vestments. From the earliest days a Priest who sacrificed was clothed in special garments, and the Eucharistic vestments mark the sacrificial aspect of the Blessed Sacrament. Therefore they are not unimportant, since they emphasize this doctrine, the offering to God the Lamb as it had been slain, the re-presenting to God on our Christian Altars the sacrifice once offered on Calvary.

The vestments consist of :

1. The Alb. Worn over the cassock, which is the ordinary priestly dress. The Alb is a long white garment, with close-fitting sleeves. It represents the purity required for the priestly life.
2. The Girdle. The "girding up" for Christian service.
3. The Stole. Worn over the shoulders, typifying the yoke of Christ which the priest bears.
4. The Maniple. Like a short stole, worn on the left arm, representing the cords with which Christ was bound.

5. The Amice. A square piece of linen worn over the shoulders, sometimes with an embroidered collar, called an Apparel, attached to it, typifying the "helmet of salvation."
6. The Chasuble. A silk vestment representing the seamless robe of Christ.

The Stole, Maniple, and Chasuble are always of the colour of the season, as is also the Altar frontal in Churches where one is used. The colours are :

- White. For our Lord's Festivals, Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, the Ascension. Also All Saints' Day, Trinity Sunday, all festivals of our Lady and of all Saints who were not martyrs.
- Red. Whit-Sunday (in token of the flames of fire). All festivals of martyrs (in token of the "blood of the martyrs, which is the seed of the Church"). Also festivals of the Holy Cross.
- Purple. For all penitential seasons. Lent, Advent, Ember Days, Rogation Days, Vigils.
- Green. For all other ferial days (that is days which are not festivals). The Sundays after Trinity and the Sundays after Epiphany.
- Black. All funerals and Masses for the Departed.

When Mass is said for a special object, the appropriate colour may be used, and it is then called a Votive Mass—such as a Mass of the Holy Spirit, which would be said during a Retreat or if a Confirmation is about to take place, when red vestments would be used. At a Votive Mass of our Lady, for a Guild of St. Mary, and at other times, the colour would be white. At Mass in time of war or pestilence, the colour would be purple in token of penitence.

When the Priest is vested, he enters the Church, and after he has placed the sacred vessels on the Altar, with the Corporal under them, he makes his private preparation, standing before the Altar, the server kneeling by him and making the responses. Servers and acolytes are men and boys who assist the Priest

in the minor parts of the service. (It is not in accordance with Catholic practice for women to serve at Mass.) The servers wear a cotta or rochet which, like the surplices of the choristers, is a token of the purity of heart required of those who serve the sanctuary.*

The service then begins with the Lord's Prayer, and we may think of the Bread for our souls, which is given in the Blessed Sacrament. Then comes the collect for purity, praying that even the very thoughts of our hearts may be cleansed, before we approach this great Mystery. Originally these two prayers were part of the Priest's private preparation, but they are now usually shared with the people.

Then come the Commandments and prayer, "Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law." This may be replaced by the nine-fold "Kyrie" (Kyrie means "O Lord,") "Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy," repeated nine times—really a shorter form of the same prayer, having the same thought of asking for mercy for our sins against God's Commandments.

Then the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for the special Mass follow. Before the Gospel, the Missal (the Service book of the Mass), is moved from the right to the left of the Altar, typifying the Gospel going forth into the world. In the Creed, at the words "and was Incarnate," all should kneel out of reverence for the great wonder of the Incarnation, and at the last words of the Creed, the sign of the Cross is made, as a token of our Faith. Both the Creed and the Gloria are the note of a Festival Mass and should properly be omitted on ferias. For this reason also they are not said at Requiems.

After the Creed comes the Offertory, which does not mean the collection of the alms of the faithful (though that takes place here), but the offering to God of the yet unconsecrated Elements of Bread and Wine. The server brings the Elements (the Bread and Wine) to the Priest, who takes what he requires, and offers

* Sailors and soldiers serve in uniform, as they may not put anything over their uniform: no special dress is really necessary for a server, although it is usual.

them to God ; then follows the Lavabo, or ceremonial cleansing of the Priest's hands, the server pouring the water for that purpose.

Any notices are then given out, and prayers asked, for the sick and others in need, and for the departed. It is customary to make the sign of the Cross when prayers are asked for the departed, in token of our belief and hope of their eternal salvation through Christ Crucified.

Then comes the prayer for the Church Militant (Militant means "fighting"). The Church on earth must still fight with sin and temptation. It is a help to remember how great is the number of those who have passed into the Church at Rest, by whose prayers we are benefited. After the last great Day we may hope to attain to the Church Triumphant. In the Prayer for the Church Militant we pray for all, for the King and Royal Family, for Bishops, clergy, and congregations, for the sick, for those in need, and the departed.

Then follow the Exhortations, of which only the short Exhortation is generally used (though it is very helpful sometimes to read the others, and learn from them the great danger of unworthy Communion): and then the Confession, during which we think of the sins of which we have to repent since our last Communion, and then follows the Absolution. This is a statement that the people will be pardoned if they truly repent. It is customary to make the Sign of the Cross at the words "Pardon and deliver you from all your sins," in token of our faith in God's forgiveness through the death of our Saviour on the Cross.

After the Absolution come the "Comfortable Words," passages of Scripture. Here begins the more solemn part of the service. Notice how hitherto the thought has been all of sin and the need of penitence. Now, having cleansed our hearts, we are invited to "Lift them up unto the Lord," and from that we pass on to the Sanctus, "Holy, holy, holy," the great song in which we join with Angels and Archangels in the worship of Heaven. At certain seasons, this is preceded by "Proper Prefaces," thanksgivings for the special Mystery of our Faith commemorated at that time.

The Sanctus is followed by the "Prayer of Humble Access." To have access to anyone means to be able to come near them, and we are now preparing to draw very near to GOD. This is a most beautiful prayer, which may often be used as a private preparation for Communion.

After this comes the central and holiest part of the Mass, the Consecration. (Any who are not strong and cannot kneel throughout Mass, should sit during the first part of the service, and kneel, if possible, from the time of the Consecration, since our Lord is present then.)

At the Consecration of the Host the Priest genuflects and then raises the Host, and the same at the Consecration of the Chalice. This is called the Elevation, and the faithful bow before our Lord present under the veils of Bread and Wine. In Churches where there is a Sacring Bell, it is rung at the Elevation.

The Priest first communicates himself, then any other Priests and servers who are communicating, and then the people. All should be careful to be ready to go up at once and take the first vacant place at the Altar, and, while waiting, kneel. It is right to genuflect (bend the knee to the ground) on going up to communicate, for our Lord is there. This should always be done when the Blessed Sacrament is on the Altar, whether at Mass, or before the Tabernacle, just as we should kneel to our Lord if we saw him. We kneel upright at the Altar, and make the sign of the Cross, just before the Priest gives us the Communion in either kind. The usual practice, and one which has the sanction of antiquity, is to cross one hand over the other, and reach out to receive the Sacred Host in the palm of the hand. In some Churches it is customary for the Priest to place the Sacred Host in the mouth, and in this case a houseling cloth should be used. The Priest puts the Chalice to the Communicant's lips, who takes a few drops of the Precious Blood. It is sometimes safer for the Communicant to guide the Chalice with one hand.*

After we return to our place, there is generally time for some

* Communion may be received out of Mass from the Reserved Sacrament if notice be given to the priest and the communicant be fasting.

prayers of adoration and thanksgiving for the wonderful Gift we have received, and then follows the Lord's Prayer, the Prayer of thanksgiving, offering ourselves to God's service (or sometimes in its place one of oblation), then the Gloria in Excelsis, which is a hymn of praise and thanksgiving, and the Blessing. This order is sometimes changed, according to the particular Liturgy which is being followed: the Order in the Scottish or the American Prayer Book being sometimes used.

The "Ablutions" are the cleansing of the Sacred Vessels. These are usually taken immediately after the Communion of the people. The server pours wine and water into the Chalice, and the Priest rinses with it, and then consumes it, afterwards cleansing the Chalice and Paten with the Purificator.

A Priest may, if necessary, "duplicate," that is, celebrate Mass twice. No one but a Priest may *ever* communicate more than once a day, and if a Priest has to "duplicate," he may not consume the Ablutions after the first Mass. Otherwise, by taking the unconsecrated wine and water with which the Chalice is cleansed, he would be breaking his fast before Communion.

After the Blessing, the Priest says some private prayers, and then goes to the left of the Altar, and reads the "last Gospel," which is usually the first chapter of St. John's Gospel. Priest and server (and often the congregation also) stand for this and genuflect at the words "And the Word was made flesh," out of reverence for the Incarnation. The Priest then carries the Sacred Vessels back to the Sacristy, and the server, or Sacristan extinguishes the lights and covers the Altar.

Those who have the care of a Church, and the Sacred vessels and linen, must take the greatest pains to ensure reverence in everything connected with the Altar.

At the side of the Sanctuary, next to the Credence, will be found a small basin called a "Piscina," having a pipe running down into the earth. Down this is poured the water in which the purificator used for cleansing the Chalice has been rinsed, and also any water used by the Sacristan for the further cleansing of the Chalice. In washing Corporals or purificators it is usual to pour the first water into the earth for the same reason.

Altar linen should always be washed by those whose reverence can be ensured. In many Churches this work is given to Religious Communities.

So far we have spoken chiefly of the ceremonial at a Low Mass, at which the faithful go to communicate.

At High Mass it is much the same, only more elaborate. The Service is sung throughout, and begins with the Introit, based on the teaching of the day. The Celebrant is assisted by two other Ministers, the Deacon and Sub-Deacon, who wear, in place of a Chasuble, a Dalmatic and a Tunicle respectively. These are of the same colour and material as the Chasuble, but a different shape.

At High Mass, Incense is usually offered. This typifies the Merits of Christ, through which our prayers ascend to God. ("In every place incense shall be offered unto my Name and a pure Offering," Malachi i. 11. "The smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angel's hand," Rev. viii. 4). The server who carries the Censer is called the Thurifer, the Censer is the vessel in which the incense is burnt.

Incense is offered at the Introit, before the Gospel, and at the Offertory; before each of these the Thurifer takes it up to the Priest to be blessed; the Priest is censured and also the various servers or acolytes and, after the Offertory, he goes to the Chancel step and censes the people, as a token of united prayer rising to God. It is also used at the Elevation in some churches.

The sermon follows the Creed, and it may be noted that this is the only place in our Prayer Book where a sermon is ordered to be preached, or notices to be given out, showing that Mass and not Mattins is intended to be the chief service of the day.

Mattins is a Choir Office, intended to be said early in the morning. One of its special collects speaks of being "at the beginning of the day," which is somewhat unreal if said at twelve o'clock in the morning! The placing of Mattins at a late hour on Sunday morning is a modern custom, much to be deplored, since it tends to make Mattins, and not Mass, the principal Sunday morning service.

At the Consecration the Thurifer often kneels and censes the Blessed Sacrament at the Elevation. At High Mass there is a Procession before the Gospel. Instead of the Missal being simply moved to the other side of the Altar, it is taken in procession, preceded by two acolytes, each carrying a lighted candle, and the Sub-deacon holds the Missal from which the Deacon reads.

After the Consecration the "Agnus Dei" (O Lamb of God) is sung.

These are the chief additions at High Mass. The service is fundamentally the same as a Low Mass : we come to assist in the offering of the Sacrifice, and give to God worship and thanksgiving. On Sundays the principal Mass, whether Low or High Mass, is sometimes preceded by the Asperges or Sprinkling of the people with Holy Water.

On Great Festivals there is often a Procession before High Mass. Processions typify the Church going out into the world, gathering up the prayers of the people, and taking them back, as it were, to the Altar. A Procession always starts from the Altar and returns there. It is headed by the Thurifer and Boat-boy, then usually acolytes, with lighted candles, and the Crucifix, then the choir, boys and men, the Priests, and lastly the sacred Ministers, and the Celebrant, in a Cope, which is a large cloak clasped with a jewelled clasp, called a Morse.

The congregation should make a reverence as the Crucifix passes, the sign of their redemption, and again when the Celebrant passes, since he is about to represent Jesus Christ offering the Sacrifice of our Redemption.

"Come, let us join our songs to praise
That Banquet all Divine,
Where Jesu's Flesh becomes our meat,
And Jesu's Blood our wine.

My soul falls prostrate to adore
In lowliest homage bent,
Each day I live I love thee more,
Sweet Sacrament, Sweet Sacrament."

CHAPTER XIV

THE STRUCTURE OF CHURCHES

JUST as all Ceremonial has its symbolical meaning, so too each part of the outward structure and building of a Church has its special teaching for us.

Care in the building of Churches marked the time when Religion was at its best. Our Cathedrals took very many years to build, and those who built them gave the very best they had to give, and took the greatest care in every detail. The carving and ornament which are out of sight are as carefully done as that which can be seen—a lesson as to how all work ought to be done which is done for God.

It is the reverent love which was expended on the work, as well as the many prayers said, which create what we call an “atmosphere” in so many Churches, and especially in old Cathedrals. No one can altogether explain it, but all must be conscious of the difference in the spiritual atmosphere in Churches. External things as well as interior ones do help or hinder our worship. Of course, no Church where the Blessed Sacrament is not reserved can have the same atmosphere as where it is.

Cemeteries or Churchyards. The word Cemetery means “a sleeping-place,” where the bodies of the departed rest peacefully until the general Resurrection.

The revival of religion has made a great difference in the reverent care of Cemeteries. At the time when the Church became very “dead,” when there were few services and little teaching, before the great revival in the Church known as the “Oxford Movement,” cemeteries and Churchyards were totally neglected. Often, instead of the Cross which is the sign of

Christ's victory over death, there were only broken pillars or urns, as though God had made a mistake, cut off a life too soon, or meaningless slabs, recounting the virtues of the departed. Now we see the Cross at the head of the grave, telling of the hope of a joyful resurrection, and some inspiring words from the Holy Bible or, better still, a prayer for the soul of the one whose body rests there. Those who attend to the graves of those they love should never leave without saying a prayer for their souls.

Churchyards and Cemeteries are holy ground, since they are consecrated. It would not be right to talk or laugh loudly in them, and we should always avoid stepping on a grave, out of reverence for the dead.

Churches are built with strong walls, an outward type of the Church militant, built upon a rock.

The tower or spire points upward as a witness to God. A beautifully pointed spire lifts our heart up to Heaven, as it stands out against the sky. A most beautiful description of a spire in a well-known book teaches well its inner meaning :

“ And beyond, the straight facade of St. Mary's, Oxford, gathering its lines upward ever, till tired of window and buttress, of crotchet, finial, gargoyle, and all the rest of it, it leaps up aloft in one glorious crystal and carries up one's heart with it into the Heaven above.”

Gargoyles are the curious grotesque little heads of animals or demons which we often see outside an old Church. Often corresponding heads of angels are found within the Church.

The Porch is the entrance to the Church : it reminds us to go in quietly, and in a reverent and recollected spirit. We cannot say our prayers well, unless we make some effort to withdraw our minds from secular matters as we enter God's House. A great deal is often lost by much talking both before and after Service.

In old Churches there is often a Holy Water Stoup, carved out of the wall, either in the porch or just inside the Church, and this custom is now revived in many places. It is customary to make the sign of the Cross with the Holy Water, on entering or leaving the Church.

Many Churches are cruciform (that is in the form of a cross), the nave forming the stem, the transepts the arms, and the chancel the head of the cross. Churches are generally built facing east for several reasons.

First, because the early Christians would remember that the Jews built their synagogues facing towards Jerusalem, and this Jewish custom would lead to Christian Churches being built to face one way.

Missionaries found the heathen turning to the East to worship the sun, and this heathen custom was transformed into a Christian one, but with a new meaning, as Christians turned to the East to worship Jesus the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the World.

"The moon above, the Church below,
A wondrous race they run,
But all their radiance, all their glow,
Each borrows from its Sun."

We believe, as the Church has always believed, that Christ will come again in the East, so we build our Churches facing East, and we turn to the East at the Creed, and we lay our dead to rest with their feet towards the East. Only priests lie with their feet towards the West, facing their people.

Churches are built in three parts—Nave, Chancel, and Sanctuary.

THE NAVE

The Nave is the largest part (the name comes from "*Navis*" a ship), reminding us that the Church is the Ark which is to bear us to Heaven. We think of the Baptismal Service, where the Church is spoken of as the Ark, in which we may safely pass through the waves of this troublesome world. It is one of the very oldest similes for the Church, for we find arks and ships representing the Church, engraved in the Catacombs at Rome, where the first Christians worshipped.

The open roof of the Nave is often not unlike an inverted ship.

The first part of the Nave is called the Baptistry; here the Font stands, and beyond this no unbaptised or excommunicate person might pass. In heathen countries this primitive discipline

is often revived by Christian missionaries, and catechumens (converts preparing for Holy Baptism), or those who are doing Penance for some grievous sin, may not come beyond the Baptistery.

The name Font comes from the Latin word "*fons*," meaning beginning, since our Christian life begins here.

In the other part of the Nave are :

The Lectern, from which the Lessons are read.

The Pulpit, from which sermons are preached.

A Faldstool, at which the Litany is said, and seats for the congregation.

THE CHANCEL

The word chancel comes from a word meaning "lattice-work," on account of the screen which as a rule shuts off the Chancel from the Nave. It is right that there should always be a certain mystery about religion, since our finite minds cannot understand the infinite. The early Christians often spoke of the Holy Eucharist as the "Holy Mysteries," and so do the Orthodox to-day.

Sometimes the screen is a Rood Screen (Rood is the old Saxon word for Cross) and on a Rood Screen there is always a Calvary—that is the Crucifix in the centre, with figures of our Lady and St. John on either side.

The furniture of the Chancel consists of the stalls for the Clergy and Choir.

THE SANCTUARY

The name Sanctuary comes from the Latin "*Sanctus*," Holy. This is the most sacred part of the Church, because it contains the Altar on which our Lord comes to be present.

The Sanctuary is raised, higher than the Chancel. Everything that is possible should be done for the beautifying of the Sanctuary ; we cannot take too much pains to keep the place where Jesus deigns to enter, both clean and beautiful.

In the Sanctuary are sometimes seven lamps, hanging from the roof, which are often taken to represent the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost. Sometimes there are only three, representing the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, or one, representing the Godhead.

THE ALTAR

An Altar is that on which a sacrifice is offered, and on the Christian Altar the Priest presents before God the Offering once made on Calvary.

“Look, Father, look on his anointed Face,
And only look on us as found in him,
Look not on our misusings of thy grace,
Our prayer so languid and our faith so dim.
For lo, between our sins and their reward,
We set the Passion of thy Son, our Lord.”

We should always pay great reverence to the Altar, and everything connected with it, because it is the earthly Throne of God. In one of the Canons (that is laws) of the Church, we are told to make a reverence to the Altar, and we should never pass before it without remembering to do so.

The Reredos is the carved screen at the back of the Altar : sometimes, instead, there are curtains at the back and sides of the Altar, these are called the Dossal and wings.

The Credence is a shelf or table (next to the Piscina) on the right of the Sanctuary, on which the Cruets and Lavabo are placed.

We may take the Church as the emblem of our Sacramental life. We begin with Holy Baptism, at the Font. Then for our Confirmation we kneel just outside the Sanctuary and, for the highest privilege of all, we go further, and kneel at the Altar step, close to our Holy of Holies, the earthly Throne of our Lord and Master.



CHAPTER XV

THE CHURCH'S YEAR

IT will be helpful to go through the chief events of the Church's year, and note how each doctrine of the Creed is brought home to us as the seasons pass.

The Christian year begins with Advent, the four weeks before Christmas. The word Advent means "coming," and in Advent we think of two "comings." First the "coming" of our Lord at Christmas, when he who is very God came down to earth. Also we are led by the Church to think of the Second Coming of our Lord, and to meditate on the Four Last Things—Death and Judgment, Hell and Heaven.

Advent is not a strict fast like Lent, but it is a penitential season, and it is right to have a devotional Advent rule, e.g. to use sometimes the "Litany of the Four Last Things" as we look forward to the time when our Lord shall come to "judge the quick and the dead."

Christmas follows, the Festival of the Incarnation. Think what Christmas should mean to a Christian; the time when our Lord humbled himself and was born a little human Baby. On that first Christmas night, he who was very God took on him our human nature, and bridged over the gulf between God and man.

Christmas should never be kept only as a time for secular festivities. The joy of Christmas is because of the great mystery of the Incarnation, and the best observance of it, as shown by its name, is "Christ's Mass." The preparation of Advent should lead to a good Confession before Christmas, that we may bring him the gift of a clean heart on his Birthday. On Christmas Day there should be three Masses; at midnight, when in awe and wonder we kneel to welcome the Birth of the Infant Saviour;

in the early morning, when we come to greet the Sun of Righteousness; and the last Mass, when we worship and adore as the Angels did at Bethlehem. In most Churches we find the "Crib," a representation of the Holy Child, our Lady and St. Joseph in the stable at Bethlehem. It remains during the whole Christmas season till the Octave of the Epiphany and is intended to be used for devotions to the Holy Child, not merely as a spectacle.

Christmas is followed immediately by four Festivals. The first martyr, St. Stephen; St. John the Divine (the Beloved Disciple), the Holy Innocents, unconscious martyrs for Christ's sake, and St. Thomas of Canterbury.

The Octave of Christmas (1st January), is the Feast of the Circumcision, when Christ first shed his Blood for us, and submitted to be "obedient to the law for man." It is one of the greater Festivals of the Church, on which all should be present at Mass. It is not only, as many think, the beginning of the new secular year.

January the sixth is the Epiphany, the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, when we commemorate the visit of the Three Kings, known as the Magi or Wise Men, to Christ, and think of their gifts, which must be our gifts also—the gold of obedience, the incense of worship, the myrrh of penitence. This is another of the "Feasts of Obligation" and is kept with an Octave.

February 2nd is the Feast of the Purification of our Lady, which is specially noticeable among her other Festivals, because of the old name, still retained, Candlemas. Our Blessed Lady took the Holy Child to the Temple for her purification, which was in her case unnecessary since she was without spot of sin, yet was the "fulfilling of all righteousness," and the aged Simeon gave utterance to the Nunc Dimittis, in which he spoke of our Lord as a "Light to lighten the Gentiles." The Church commemorates this by a Procession of lighted candles, hence the name Candlemas.

The number of Sundays after the Epiphany varies according to whether Easter is late or early, and then follow the three

Sundays before Lent, Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima, so called from the number of days before Easter, 70, 60, and 50. These are in preparation for the great season of Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday.

The day before Ash Wednesday is usually known as Shrove Tuesday, because on that day all good Christians went to be absolved, or, in the old English word "shriven," as indeed most do still.

Ash Wednesday was so called because of the ceremony of the day, when the people kneel in turn while the Priest signs the Cross on their foreheads with ashes, to remind them of the fitting attitude of mind in which sinners should approach God, and of their own mortality. Such ceremonies do help to teach and guide devotion. Ash Wednesday is one of the great penitential days in the year, when Lent begins, which is to culminate in Passion-tide. Our Lent rule should be made before Ash Wednesday and offered to God. A Lent rule should consist of some definite practice of the Christian duties of Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving, added to our usual practice in these matters. The rule should be written down and self-examination made as to its faithful use.

Lent is a time of penitence, when our Lord calls each apart to be with him in the desert, and we can at least give up worldly amusements then, go more to Church, pray more, give more in alms, do more works of mercy, and practice some real bodily self-discipline.

Sometimes it is possible to make a Retreat in Lent. All should make a Retreat once a year, if possible, and this is a helpful time. A Retreat is a time given up entirely to God, under the special guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Priest who conducts the Retreat usually gives three addresses daily, and the time between the Addresses is spent in prayer and meditation. Silence is kept throughout the Retreat. There is generally a garden at a Retreat House where exercise can be taken. Week-end Retreats are now arranged constantly at several Retreat Houses, and also afternoon Retreats at many Churches, in order to make Retreats possible for those in business, and they will be found to be a

great source of spiritual help and refreshment to those who use them. Or there are many longer Retreats for those for whom they are possible.

The Fifth Sunday in Lent is called Passion Sunday, and from then until Easter it is customary that all Crosses, Crucifixes and Statues should be veiled, in honour of the Mystery of the Passion.

The last week of Lent is Holy Week, the most solemn time of all the Church's year. On the Sunday, Palm Sunday, we think of our Lord's entry into Jerusalem, and in memory of this palms are blessed before Mass, and distributed to the Faithful. There is also a procession of palms, as we strive to honour our Lord with a deeper devotion than that of the crowd, who so soon forsook him, on that first Palm Sunday.

All who can possibly do so should attend Mass every day in Holy Week, when the Story of the Passion is read throughout as the Gospel. As we listen to that story we shall be drawn to spend all the time that we can in his Presence, who suffered so much for us. In some Churches the ancient Office of Tenebrae is said on the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in Holy Week. This consists chiefly of psalms, and at the end of each psalm one of the twenty-one lighted candles is extinguished, as a type of the darkness which came into the world through sin, until only one is left alight. This is then brought forward, as a type of the light which should come into the world at the Resurrection.

Maundy Thursday is the day of the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament. It comes like a ray of light in the darkness of Holy Week, and we find the black veil removed from the Altar Cross, and a white veil instead.

Good Friday is our Lord's Death Day, to be kept by all Christians at the foot of the Cross, the day when he was "crucified, dead, and buried."

Easter Eve, Holy Saturday, should be a "still day." We think of our Lord's Body resting in the quiet tomb, "and buried."

Easter Day, the Queen of Festivals, is the great day of the Resurrection; at Easter the Church orders that all should receive Holy Communion. "The third day he rose again."

Then follow the Great Forty Days, the forty days between Easter and the Ascension, when our Lord was on earth in his risen and glorified Body, ending with Ascension Day. "And ascended into Heaven."

The fiftieth day after Easter is Whit-Sunday or Pentecost, the birthday of the Church, when the Holy Ghost, the Life-giving Spirit, came down on the Church, never to leave her. "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church."

Trinity Sunday follows, and with one last exception, closes the great round of Festivals, as we commemorate the central doctrine of our Faith, our belief in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

If we keep a day of Thanksgiving for our earthly bread, we are still more bound to give thanks for the Bread of Life, without which our souls must die. Maundy Thursday, the day of the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament, cannot be kept as a Festival because it occurs in Holy Week, so the Church appointed instead the first Thursday that is free after the great Festivals are over—that is Thursday after Trinity Sunday—for the Feast of Corpus Christi (the Body of Christ). On this Feast, or the Sunday following, there should be a procession of the Holy Sacrament in every Church where it is possible. We cannot honour Jesus too much in the Blessed Sacrament, as we keep this great Festival of the Body and Blood of Christ.

After Corpus Christi come the Sundays after Trinity in their long and quiet sequence, each with its special teaching which we learn from the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for the Sunday. At intervals come the various Saints' Days, and on September 29th the Festival of St. Michael and the Holy Angels. All Church people should know the days of the greater Saints, and observe both the Vigil and the Festival. We shall come to know and love the Saints, as we think in turn of each of those who endured and were faithful to the end.

The year closes with the Festival of All Saints, November 1st, when, gathering all the Saints into one great company, we honour^d them and ask for their prayers, that with them we may at last attain to the full "Communion of Saints" (Rev. vii. 14, 15).

These have "washed their robes and made them white in the the Blood of the Lamb," they came out of great tribulation, and "therefore are they before the Throne of God," all the great company of the Saints and Martyrs of God.

On November 2nd, All Souls' Day, we commemorate all the departed, and with these all those whom we have loved and lost, and pray that their souls being more and more purified from all stain of sin, they, like the Saints, may attain to the Heavenly Kingdom.

So ends the long yearly round of Fast and Festival, through which we learn to follow our Lord's footsteps, and learn of him and of these his chosen ones.

Faithfulness brings its own reward; what life can be dull or sordid which follows year by year the Incarnate Life of Christ, and is lifted up through the contemplation of the Mysteries of Whitsun, Trinity-tide, Corpus Christi, and which is lived, even here, in the company of our Blessed Lady and the Saints, who trod this world before us, and of the unseen Angel hosts of Heaven who are "about our path and about our way"?



THE CHURCH'S YEAR

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